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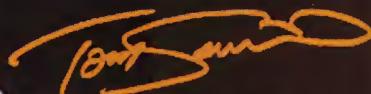
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## THIS ISSUE:

Horror and comic books. ... There is some unseen force that brings this terrifying genre of story to this specific brand of storytelling – melding the two into a perfect breeding ground for curious youngsters to get their thrills and chills. Being born at the tail end of the '70s, I sadly missed the era of EC Comics. I never had the opportunity to visit a local five and dime to check out the latest entry in *Vault of Horror* or *Tales of Suspense*. No ... by time I was old enough to be entertained by the written word, superheroes dominated the comic racks, as did licensed comics of the latest television animated hits. No *Tales from the Crypt* for me ... instead, I had my share of *X-Men*, *Spider-Man* and *Transformers*. Not to say I didn't desire a good scare-comic – it was just the options were scarce.

In 1987, however, two defining moments in the world of horror comics occurred in my life that cemented my love of the merged-media format. The first came from my viewing of a movie entitled *The Lost Boys*. In the film, Corey Haim falls into a world of the bloodsucking undead, finding his only help from a couple cornball comic book store-keepers (Corey Feldman and Jamison Newlander). I found myself in the same position as Haim did within the film. I was a superhero guy (but, again, it's not like horror comics were available at my local convenient shop).

I had no idea that horror comics were so ... important (and they were – heck, they saved the town of Santa Carla). It just so happened to be my luck that a superhero horror comic book penetrated my small town of Goshen, Ohio that same year – and it was a comic that haunted my dreams for years to come.

DC Comics released a new *Annual* comic series in 1987 for their long-running *Action Comics*. Written by John Byrne and drawn by Art Adams – *Action Comics Annual #1* featured a vampire-story team-up starring Batman and Superman. [Warning: Spoilers] Batman is drawn to a small town in Louisiana where the townspeople are being killed off one by one by a young vampire girl. Calling in for backup, Batman with Superman take on this demon child in one (in my humble opinion) of the greatest horror comics to date (at least for a single-issue story slam dunk). In the comic, Batman is mistaken for a vampire by the young girl, and at the end, he hosts one of the most chilling scenes on paper, as he digs up the graves of all the town's victims – stakes in hand – to rid the town of its "curse" once and for all.

This comic resided on my nightstand throughout the next few years as I read it over and over again. Again, with no major source for horror comics in my area, it took another five years before a comic book store opened up close enough for me to tackle *Swamp Thing*, *Hellboy* or (my personal favorite) licensed horror properties such as *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and so forth.

Which actually brings us to this issue: *HorrorHound*, from day one, has been a horror MOVIE magazine. We receive letters constantly from fans asking why we do not cover horror artists, authors, comics and music in a more all-encompassing capacity. Our general rule of thumb has always been – if it's relatable to movies, we try to cover it. Every so often an exception sneaks in (we have our weaknesses from time to time), but mostly, we keep to movie and movie-related coverage.

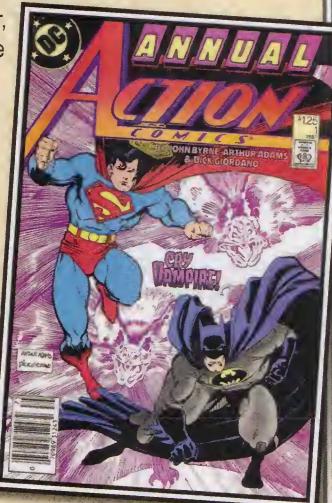
This issue is a big exception, however. The *HorrorHound* staff is comprised of so many comic book junkies that it was nearly impossible to devote an entire issue to comic books and only keep to licensed titles (although, as evidenced by our new bottom-page comic facts, we sure tried). Japanese manga, classic men's magazines, and non-movie related comics such as *I ... Vampire* and *Tomb of Dracula*, all make appearances this issue thanks to the expressed love of these titles from our various writers.

We even threw in a bonus retrospective this issue with a look back at Stephen King and George A. Romero's *Creepshow* – and how could we resist? Nothing shows dedication to the horror comic genre more than this film. We even produced an exclusive cover for *Creepshow* for comic book stores – so die hard collectors should visit their local comic shop today to pick up that variant! We hope you enjoy our issue devoted to horror comic books. We have slipped in as much horror comic love as we could throughout this issue, with random sidebars and write-ups on some of the best and most elusive titles within the medium.

~ Nathan Hanneman (Editor-in-Chief)



**Mad Monster Party** (1967): Dell released many licensed movie and TV comics throughout their 44 years in existence (including this *Mad Monster Party* one-shot), most of which can be seen throughout this issue.



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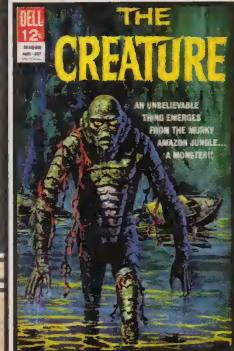
Cover Design by Nathan Thomas Millner  
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# LETTERS • LETTERS • LETTERS • LETTERS • LETTERS

Just wanted to thank you guys for doing a retrospective on the most awesome, jam-packed year for horror films ever: 1981! Only true fans like yourselves would understand the importance of that time period for genre titles. I was overly excited to get my copy and dove into it immediately. Everything was pretty much covered, but I did notice there was no mention (or even a poster) of *Graduation Day* (released 5/1) or *The Fan* (5/15). Was it just an innocent oversight? Sorry to be a nitpicker.

Keep up the fantastic work and I look toward to the next issue!

Jeff Nelson

Even though there were many delays in *Priest*, it was a well-worth wait. The war between humans and vampires is really expressed in this movie. With CGI (computer graphic imagery) available, you would think they would not have to make any mountains out of foam. What happened to using the good old green screen?

Paul Dale Roberts (Elk Grove, CA)

Thanks for the 1981 tribute issue! Brings back great memories. From 1980 to 1984, I can remember a new horror film coming out every Friday. Those were the days!

David Marcel

[In regard to last issue's dedication to 1981 ~ Editor]

*Dead & Buried* is a forgotten gem that provides the perfect blend of subtle humor with outright horror. The spooky atmosphere, Stan Winston's show-stopping FX work, and superb acting (especially Jack Albertson and James Farentino) make it a must-see for any horror movie fan. It is clearly one of the best horror movies to come out of the '80s, a great decade for horror.

Speaking of horror movies that came out in 1981, I hope that *HorrorHound* spends some time on Andrea Bianchi's sleazy, ultra-disturbing *Burial Ground: The Nights of Terror*. The plot and dialogue might not be of the highest quality, but the creepy atmosphere, deeply unsettling characters, and Giannetto De Rossi's dazzling FX work make *Burial Ground* a noteworthy, often-overlooked horror movie that should satiate any GoreHound's appetite.

David Ginsberg

As the editor and author of *The History of the Teen Slasher* in issue #28, The Return of Ghostface, I would like to thank [Nathan Hanneman] for producing this amazing and truthful piece. In this article, you mentioned how the slasher genre was extremely popular during the '80s, but "Hollywood ... will squeeze every penny out of a good thing," destroying the slasher genre completely. As awful as this sounds, it is unfortunately true. I also agree on your point of view that *Cabin Fever*, *SwimFan*, *Freddy vs. Jason*, *Wrong Turn*, *Cry\_Wolf* and *Stay Alive* "are all still keeping alive the concepts first introduced in *Scream*, 15 years ago."

I have been an avid horror fan since the age of 5, when I watched my first horror film against my parents' consent. Your amazing cover of *Scream* (#28) was the first issue I have ever purchased of *HorrorHound*, and was also the first horror film that I ever laid eyes upon, becoming hooked immediately into this genre. Like I said before, I agree with your article, but I believe you could have added more details about the newer movies, the millennial generation which you mentioned some, so that if someone wanted to watch those movies they would have a bit of background on them. Also, you could have mentioned that even though most sequels make a profit at the box office, they never live up to the original. Two prime examples of sequels that are not as awesome as the original are *Scream 2* and *I Still Know What You Did Last Summer*. Anyway, I would like to thank you for revealing other slasher films from the '90s that I have never heard of. Thanks to you, I'm going to go buy some popcorn and get my scream on.

Sincerely, Silvia Garcia (Miami Gardens, Florida)

I have been a subscriber for a few months and a horror fan for near-20 years now. I am a fan of the magazine and commend your staff for really creating a great product each issue.

I have one critique though. The one thing I wish your magazine and Web site offered is more focus on horror in literature. Horror books make up a large portion of my horror-product consumption each year. I'm not talking about the occasional nod to King or Barker, there are so many great authors out there: Richard Laymon, Edward Lee, Brian Keene, Joe Hill and many, many more that really influence the horror genre as a whole.

Please consider altering your content to provide a segment to give the *HorrorHound* treatment to one of my favorite mediums. Regardless, I love your product and wish you all the best.

Best wishes, Ken Enser

Long-time horror fan. Especially obsessive in the late '70s up until the mid-'90s on gore-soaked B-movie sleaze brought forth to me by the many glorious companies that have now fallen sadly into nostalgia and obscurity. But you have done a top-notch job in the resurrection of various sleaze. My question is – has it ever been discussed or mentioned making a compendium magazine of all the Video Invasion articles in one handy resource for weirdos like me that have a near-psychotic obsession with gleaming these fragments of the past to view once again – or even a book? That would be wonderful! Many people would pay a lot of money for such a thing!

Yours truly, a devoted fan

[*HorrorHound* has been in discussions regarding bringing Video Invasion to booksellers since its introduction in issue #12. And especially now that a large chunk of these articles are out of print. Stay tuned! ~ Editor]

MR. SKIN PRESENTS



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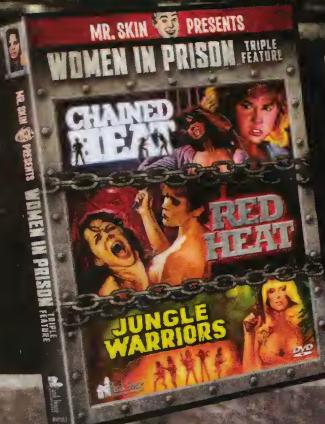


## RED HEAT

Linda Blair heads back to a brutal penitentiary, this time to be tormented by the evil prisoner Sofia (Sylvia Kristel, *Emmanuelle*).

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# WELCOME BACK TO FRIGHT NIGHT

• by Jessica Dwyer

Over the last few years, bloodsuckers have multiplied to the point that the sheer amount of vampire films seem to equal the number of zombies outside your local mall. But it isn't the volume of nosferatu that's the problem – it's the size of their fangs, or more precisely the lack thereof.

Thanks to the romanticizing of the genre, vampire movies have lost their bite and with few exceptions, the scare has left these films high and dry. How do you fix it? How do you inject new blood into the land of the undead? You go back to a classic and you show the new kids on the block how it's done. That's what Dreamworks is doing this August when the newly reimagined *Fright Night* hits theaters (in Real 3D if you choose).

The updated *Fright Night* takes place in a suburb of Las Vegas, commenting on the economic downturn that has hit many people hard. Suddenly empty homes, supposedly vacated by owners who have gone into foreclosure, provide easy hunting ground for a vampire. Disappearances are shrugged off as families fleeing debt, making Vegas a place for prime pickings.

This is where Charley Brewster meets vampire Jerry Dandridge. The new Jerry is purely a predator, sexually and physically. He's a shark on the hunt and he smells blood when it comes to Charley's friends and family. Gone are the sympathetic leanings of a lonely soul who might have given Charley a choice of forgetting what he's seen.

When Charley realizes the truth a little too late, he heads to Peter Vincent, now a flashy Las Vegas magician with a penchant for eyeliner and leather. But Charley soon learns that, much like Jerry, what you see on the surface is not what lies beneath. Peter is a coward of the first order and it takes a swath of destruction to lend both Charley and Peter the courage to stop the evil vampire for good.

Fans of the original have a reason to celebrate with this updated version. The script was written by TV's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* alumni Marti Noxon. Producer Mike De Luca (the Oscar-winning *The Social Network*, as well as



CHRISTOPHER MINTZ-PLASSE AS EVIL ED

genre fare like *Freddy's Dead*, *In the Mouth of Madness*, *Blade* and *Blade 2*) is part of the producing team. Craig Gillespie is in the director's chair, marshalling the talents of heavy hitters like Colin Farrell (Jerry), Anton Yelchin (Charley), Toni Collette (Charley's mother, Jane), Christopher Mintz-Plasse (Evil Ed), Imogen Poots (Amy) and David Tennant (Peter Vincent). It's an impressive group of talent for any Hollywood blockbuster, but the fact that it's for *Fright Night* should have every horror fan grinning as wide as Amy.

*HorrorHound* was on set while filming took place in Albuquerque, New Mexico (standing in for Las Vegas), noting with pleasure the level of detail in all

aspects of production. With fans of the original film both before and behind the camera, it's clear that *Fright Night* is out to give horror fans something they're thirsting for. Here's what the cast and crew of one of this year's biggest horror releases had to say:

### Producing Fear – Mike De Luca

**HorrorHound:** You've been involved with many horror projects in the past. How was it for you to work on *Fright Night*?

**Mike De Luca:** It was a really big deal. I'm a super fan of the original. This is a movie I remember seeing when I was younger, and when Alison and Michael said the rights were available, I thought it was a great candidate for a remake.

**HH:** So were you ready for any sort of backlash when fans found out that you were remaking it, since most seem to either like or really, really hate remakes?

**MDL:** Right, but really, when do they like them? I mean from *Battlestar Galactica* to *King Kong* ... it's justifiable cynicism. Especially being a genre fan myself, you read that they are remaking something and you roll your eyes and say, "Oh my god, does Hollywood have no original ideas?" I'm a super geeked-out genre fan ... I'm on the internet every day, so I've seen the backlash like, "Oh my god, they are turning Starbuck [on *Galactica*] into a woman!" I was prepared for the "it's a remake, so it can't be good" reaction. You have to get past all that initial naysaying, which I completely understand because people have been burned by a lot of remakes. You just have to put your movie together, pull together all of your elements and hope that when people start seeing the trailer and the TV spots ... with the *Let the Right One In* remake, there was a lot of naysaying, but now the material looks so good and all the positive reviews; as long as the movie delivers the goods, all of that fades away. But we have a responsibility to turn that opinion around – I think we have and I think we will.

I think treating the material with integrity also helps. Once again using *Battlestar Galactica* as an example, it soon became clear that Ron Moore was treating the material with the gravitas it deserved. Still focusing on human beings facing extinction, but coming from one of their own creations this time, which was a subtle difference from the original series. In the original, the Cylons were the product of a reptilian species and in the new series he put a spin on it where we created this problem. You quickly realized he treated both the fans and the premise with integrity.

When we started to develop our remake, we were working off this premise of a young boy, that kind of single-parent household, coming of age story. As a son, he has this protective instinct for his mother, almost a surrogate husband in that respect. He's got his first love, he's sort of bloomed over his junior and sophomore years to become this sort of big man on campus, everything is aligned for him as he transitions into adulthood ... but then Jerry moves in. Even if it wasn't a vampire movie, Jerry represents this super confident, older male threat that shows up next door. I think fans of the original will respond to all those psychological issues and see that we tried to do something with that idea with a lot of integrity. Hopefully that helps answer a lot of the naysayer questions.

**HH:** In comparison to the original film, where do you see the horror/comedy balance leaning?

**MDL:** I think we're scarier, less tongue in cheek. I think



**Nosferatu: Plague of Terror** (1991): This four-part comic series released by Millennium Publications in 1991-'92 acted as a prequel and sequel to F.W. Murnau's silent film, *Nosferatu*. A TPB of the story was issued in 2009.



ANTON YELCHIN AS CHARLEY BREWSTER

the comedy we were looking for is like in *Aliens* with Bill Paxton. You know, "Why don't you put her in charge!" about Newt. We wanted to go with the roller-coaster ride of big scares but then, how would normal people react if Jerry the Vampire moved in next door? So we've got jokes like, "Jerry? That's his name? That's a terrible name for a vampire." Our humor tries to be organic to the situation, we try to never wink at the audience. It's more cathartic relief ... I guess it would be like in *Jaws* when they say, "You're gonna need a bigger boat." We're going for those kind of comic vistas.

**HH:** The music for the original film was a very big part of it. What can we expect with this film's soundtrack?

**MDL:** I'm a big fan of anything that recalls Hitchcock, and I know Craig feels like we have a credible, suspenseful scary movie here. So I think we're going to go with a combo of composers that can work around a really scary movie, conveying that sense of dread. Because it deals with pop culture and teenage characters, I think there's room, especially at the beginning of the movie – something I think *Zombieland* did beautifully – to mix pop culture and certain needle drops that really fit the characters. When events take that turn into abject horror, or abject supernatural events [are introduced], we'll have more of a traditional score. But we're looking at a kind of a blend, an original approach that stands on its own.

**HH:** In the first film, you didn't really get to know where Jerry Dandridge came from, his age, etc. Did you give him more of a backstory while working on the script?

**MDL:** I think characters are scarier when you don't know where they came from. You don't get full disclosure, you don't know what they are about. We tried to return to this idea of a feral, calculating predatory vampire. Not someone looking for love with a human being or someone with brooding angst, but a killer and a predator who can be charming if it draws you in, like a lure on a fishing line. But he wants blood and he wants to kill you. We kept it single minded in that respect. There is an indication that he's old, that he's been around a long time, and we've employed the notion of vampires operating in tribes. But other than that, he's a throwback to a vampire that wants to snack on you, kill everyone around you and move on.

**HH:** So are there any *Twilight* jokes?

**MDL:** [laughing] There are one or two. We shot several so I'm not sure what ones we're going to use. They all come from the mouth of Chris Mintz-Plasse. But the point being, if you've read those books, it might make you vulnerable in thinking you can reason with this guy. And you can't.

#### Ed is Evil – Christopher Mintz-Plasse

**HorrorHound:** In the original film, Ed and Peter had a relationship that was actually sweet in a lot of ways. Is that repeated in this film?

**Christopher Mintz-Plasse:** Not too much, they sort of focus on mine and Charley's relationship. In the original



30 DAYS OF NIGHT

they were friends, but you couldn't tell if Ed was jealous or if they'd had a falling out or whatever. So we really concentrated on that in this movie. Peter and I have one really funny, awesome scene together. I don't want to ruin anything, but it's good, it's really good.

**HH:** Where did you come from in approaching this character since Ed has become sort of iconic in his own right?

**CMP:** [Stephen Geoffreys] was amazing in the original, very over the top and flamboyant. So I wanted to be very different, just the opposite. Our whole movie itself is different from the original, so I didn't want any similarities. The whole movie, Charley and I have had a sort of falling out, so there's sort of a depression to my character. When Ed becomes a vampire, he gets to show off to his best friend that betrayed him, which is really, really good.

**HH:** You're going darker in your roles, such as this one and especially at the end of *Kick-Ass*.

**CMP:** Yeah! It definitely helps, because in like *Superbad* and *Role Models*, I was very lovable and sweet. And I'm not in real life. [laughs] But no, I think I'm a decent actor and I enjoy getting to play these roles. I got to play a superhero which I'd never done before, and now I get to play a vampire which is awesome.

**HH:** *Fright Night* is a decent-sized production – are you getting to do some insane stunts?

**CMP:** Yeah, I got to do an amazing scene with Peter Vincent. In the first half I was mainly acting with Anton, but in the second half I am a vampire, so there's a lot of stunt work, a lot of wire work, and a lot of blood and gore. It's really exciting.

**HH:** How gory is it?

**CMP:** [gesturing to a severed arm attached to him] It's pretty gory from what I've seen. I've been off set for three weeks because there's a chunk of it that I'm not in. But the opening scene and the scenes that I'm in are very bloody.

**HH:** Do you have a favorite scene that you've done thus far?

**CMP:** Anton and I have a scene in the beginning where we are looking for our friend; I don't want to give much away, but it's just straight dialogue and we got to improvise a lot of it together. There's a lot of good acting between Anton and I in that scene. And we've also got a big fight scene. It's going to be a lot of work, but I'm really excited about it.

#### The Very Understanding Girlfriend – Imogen Poots

**HH:** In the original film Jerry was very seductive and there was this great chemistry between he and Amy on the dance floor. What happens to get you in his clutches this time?

**Imogen Poots:** There is actually a chase and she strays. It's definitely seductive. It's literally through a kiss that he transforms her into a vampire. And he seduces more than just Amy in this – he seduces Chris' character Eddie, and then attempts to seduce Toni's character. I think the transformation takes place



COLIN FARRELL AS JERRY DANDRIDGE

**30 Days of Night** (2002): Prior to being turned into a film, *30 Days of Night* was a best selling comic mini-series (three issues) from Steve Niles and Ben Templesmith and released by IDW Publishing.



because of the kiss and the transfer of the blood. Of course, the bite is key.

**HH:** Amy's final appearance in the original was very iconic. Do you have something special in store for us?

**IP:** It's an amazing prosthetic – this distorted face – that we've gotten to work with. From an artistic perspective, it's amazing to watch that all take place. It's a shocking moment that symbolizes Jerry's effect on her when she transforms into a vampire, quite scary.

**HH:** Did they do any molding or sculpting of you?

**IP:** Molding, teeth, contacts, contact fitting. I find all that stuff very interesting, so it was fun to watch it all go on around me.

**HH:** Are you getting to do any of the stunts?

**IP:** A few. Toni actually got to drive the car and Anton's been doing some work with fire. He's getting to do proper stunts and I'm doing girly stunts like jumping over things.

**HH:** You and Toni are basically the two female leads for the whole movie. How was it working with a primarily male cast?

**IP:** They've all been very gentlemanly. Chris and I tell each other we love each other every day. [laughs] It's all love among the vampires.

**The Boy Next Door – Anton Yelchin**

**HH:** After Chekov in *Star Trek* and Kyle Reese in *Terminator Salvation*, how was it to take on yet another iconic genre role like Charley?

**Anton Yelchin:** It's really great; I'm honored to be a part of this. The original is such a great film. In terms of discussing the horror genre in general, it's fascinating [to examine] the effect that the icons of the genre have had, the way the semantics of the genre change. ... The original was such a smart film and also very entertaining. I feel lucky to be a part of that, it's a great character. I think this film's a little less self-conscious; it's more about the story as opposed to the original that was more specifically about the genre itself.

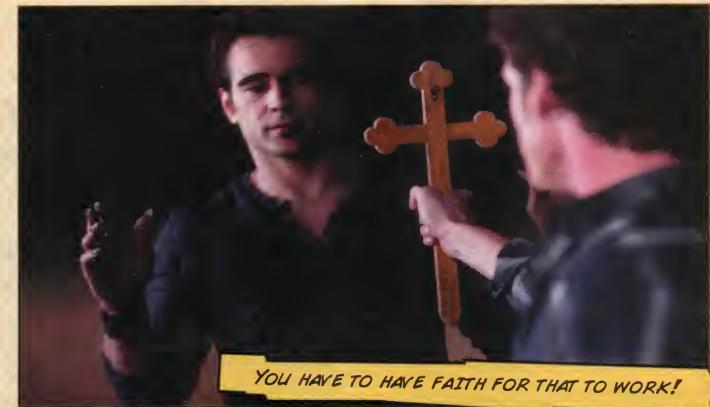
**HH:** It was very self-aware.

**AY:** Yeah, and I think that this film is very respectful [of the original]; it uses elements outside of just the plot points, while also giving Charley a bit more of an arc. I think that the original really pinpoints a time that the genre was conscious of being genre, but in a sort of self-parodying way. And Marti's script definitely does that, but I also think that everyone, especially Chris, sounds so natural and grounded in the adolescent dialogue. I know I watch movies and say, "I don't speak that way." I don't think any adolescent in our film is the generic dumb victim. Jerry is such a profound menace. I think they all come into this situation and they don't know what the fuck to do, especially Charley. He's ignorant to it at first. He's not victimized; he just doesn't believe in vampires.

**HH:** Chris had said you two had a scene where you improvised a lot and bantered back and forth. Sounds like you two are taking it upon yourselves to make it more realistic and more true to life.



TONI COLLETTE PORTRAYS CHARLEY'S MOTHER, JANE



YOU HAVE TO HAVE FAITH FOR THAT TO WORK!

**AY:** Absolutely. I think it just makes scenes feel more natural and fun. You get a truer sense of communication between the characters as opposed to scripted dialogue. It brings a sense of balance to this film – sometimes you need a stylized moment to make it more "genre" and then you have two people just talking. We did that most of the time actually, with Amy, with Chris, with Toni, even with Colin. There's natural kind of dialogue as opposed to the stylized.

**HH:** Charley and Peter had a hero-worship type of relationship in the original, before Charley discovered the reality of who he was. It sounds like that's going to be a little different in this one. Can you expand on that a little bit?

**AY:** Yeah, I think that the main difference is that Charley has lost his appreciation of fantastic elements as opposed to Ed who's still very fond of them. Charley has made an effort to leave his adolescent past and move on. Then when Ed approaches him with this idea of speaking to Peter Vincent about it, he blows him off, thinks it absurd. Ultimately Charley does visit Peter when he has nowhere else to go and learns, similar to the original, that Peter is just a hoax.

**HH:** So I have to ask, how was it to get set on fire?

**AY:** It was great! Granted, I didn't go fully up in flames, but they set my shoulder on fire, they set my arm on fire, they set my legs on fire and my chest. It's actually really cold. You have to put on two pairs of long johns drenched in this freezing fluid, then these two shirts, then this plastic goes over it and finally they funnel it with this freezing gel on your balls. You're afraid you're going to lose everything you got down there. When I put on those long johns, it's like jumping into this freezing body of water where you suddenly can't breathe. When they set you on fire it feels nice, you're just trying to get warm! It's really counter to what you would think. I was standing there waiting, thinking, "Please set me on fire." When they finally do, it's nice, like coming in from a rainy day and sitting by the fire. But the stunt guys are great. Ironically, my stunt guy's name is Chris Brewster – he got set on fire something like 30 times in a day. It was more than they'd ever done, pretty hard-core.

**Directing Dandridge – Craig Gillespie**

**HH:** *Fright Night* is really different from the previous works that you've done. Why did you choose to do it?

**Craig Gillespie:** Yes it is. The funny thing is, when the idea came up and my agent came to me with "You should do *Fright Night*," I was in the middle of developing some smaller projects and I said, "Sure, fine," and I had a meeting with Dreamworks the next day. But it wasn't on my radar at all. Then I read Marti Noxon's script, and it's such a great script, particularly the mix of the horror and the humor. I love to mix genres; *Lars and the Real Girl* is sort of a mix of the emotional and the humor, and just being able to walk that line is what really attracted me to it. Plus, horror is just a fun genre and as a director it gives you a lot of opportunities. I liked how different it was from what



**Underworld** (2003): While many comic books have been released for the *Underworld* film franchise, IDW originally published a single-issue story in conjunction with the first film's release in 2003.



IMOGEN POOTS (AMY) WITH ANTON YELCHIN

I'd done before – the camera is so integral in horror films as opposed to my previous films where you want the camera to just stay out of the way.

**HH:** So much detail has been put into everything on the set. How would you say you filmed this?

**CG:** Well, we shot it in 3-D, so in a way it's a little more classical in its approach. I mean, you can't go handheld with 3-D cameras; it makes you nauseous because it's too much movement. So you're forced into a classical way of filmmaking, which is kind of fun. Not to say it feels dated, but there are these big swooping camera moves because you always want the camera to be moving in 3-D so you feel the space. My dolly grips weren't thrilled about that notion – I don't think there was a shot we didn't have a 90-pound camera on a rig moving through everything. But it truly does make you feel like you are in the space, and you get to design these elaborate shots that move around the space and the actors which is really fun.

**HH:** From the trailers, the grays and dark shots look really sort of dead and there's some great color contrasts.

**CG:** We had a really great DP, Javier Aguirresarobe; he did the last two *Twilight* films, *The Road*, *The Others*. ... He shoots beautiful stuff which is kind of integral to me. I wanted everyone to be immersed in this creepy, subdued, foggy atmosphere. I mean, obviously it's a vampire film so there are not a lot of daylight shots.

**HH:** As a director, how do you approach doing a remake/reimagining of a previous film while staying true to your own vision of it?

**CG:** Honestly, I didn't really approach it as a remake. I saw the original when it first came out, and really remembered it within that context, being a teenage kid. I deliberately didn't look at it while I was prepping – Marti had written such a concise script with such a clear tone that I really took that and ran with it. Once we'd talked about the movie, fleshed it out, figured out how I was going to shoot, then I went back and checked out *Fright Night* just to see if there were certain things we wanted to pay homage to. Just give a little nod to the original. We still have the mix of horror and humor from the original, but Jerry's written quite differently. That's what I like in the new screenplay; he's a real predator, almost in the sexual predator kind of way. There's something in that I'd really like to explore, nothing romantic here.

**HH:** It really seems like there's nothing sympathetic [about Jerry] as there was in the original. He's just

here to eat you.

**CG:** There's almost this serial killer aspect to it in the way we approach it. Fundamentally, he needs blood; how would he go about that and stay concealed? There was that dark side to it I really liked and that I hadn't seen before in vampire films.

**HH:** How amazing was it to get someone like Colin Farrell to be in this role?

**CG:** I was very excited we got him. He's perfect for it. He was at the top of the list. He and I met and turns out he's a huge fan of the original. He'd grown up on it, seen it 15 times as a teenager. At first, he wasn't interested in the notion of doing a remake, then he read Marti's script and he was like, "Ah, it's good."

**HH:** Did he bring anything to the role himself or just basically play from the script?

**CG:** Oh, there's a lot of stuff, I mean with any good actor both in terms of dialogue and the physical nuances of inhabiting that character. ... Even though you're talking about a vampire, you ask yourself how would this really work, how

would he hunt, what are his yearnings, what is his body going through needing this blood. ... There's all this stuff that came up that he worked out. It winds up being a lot of subtext that really rounds out his character.

**HH:** That's one thing I'm curious about from the director's perspective. How do you direct an actor to be a vampire? It doesn't exist, but you want it to be as real as it could possibly be; you want it to be taken seriously.

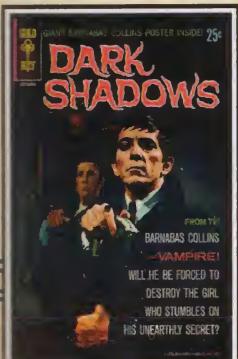
**CG:** If you don't take it seriously, no one is going to take it seriously. You have to have a certain respect for the material. In this case, you just have to do your homework, roll up your sleeves and go "All right, here's his backstory. He was made 400 years ago ..." and you go through the process of him living through all these different times. Maybe the tedium of just having to exist and never getting to go out into daylight becomes so mundane, and this complete lack of fear, how that would define you as a person and your actions. You get into all that psychology – even though it's a fantastical world, you can find motivation for why he is the way he is, his behavior, or why he

reacts in a certain way in scenes. It's sort of like being an adrenaline junkie. He's so fucking bored with life that he needs to do some reckless stuff because he is immortal, like those guys who space dive just to feel alive. Some of the stuff he does seems crazy, but it's some kind of high. If things go wrong, he can just always pack up and leave and go somewhere else.

ANTON YELCHIN  
PREPARES FOR BATTLE

THERE ARE GOOD REASONS TO BE AFRAID OF THE DARK.

**Dark Shadows** (1969): From 1969 to 1976 Gold Key Comics published an ongoing comic series (35 issues printed total) based on the *Dark Shadows* daily soap opera.



# THE NOT QUITE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLER

## An Exclusive Interview with David Tennant • by Jessica Dwyer

In the world of genre films there aren't many actors as beloved as Roddy McDowall. The actor created numerous roles that were iconic, but for horror fans the role of Peter Vincent, the horror host who found his backbone thanks to a fan who believed in him, is the one that is truly held dear. When the filmmakers of the new *Fright Night* went to cast the updated version, it could only fall to an actor with the same level of talent, heart, genre cred, and just plain likeability to take on the role. They found a perfect fit with David Tennant.

Tennant became well known in the States after portraying the most popular Doctor (number 10) in the history of the sci-fi classic series *Doctor Who*. He usurped longtime favorite (and classic-horror vet) Tom Baker in UK polls. He also starred as *Harry Potter* baddie Barty Crouch Jr. in the blockbuster *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. Tennant starred in numerous BBC productions prior to that (including a sinister turn as a psychopathic stalker in *Secret Smile*), and has many stage productions under his belt. Recently, he broke records as Hamlet on stage opposite Sir Patrick Stewart and currently has returned to the world of Shakespeare alongside his *Doctor Who* co-star Catherine Tate in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Point being, Tennant brings serious acting chops to the part much like McDowall did, who was already a legend when he starred in the '80s classic. You can be certain that once the film opens one thing theatergoers will be talking about is David Tennant.

Speaking of talking about David Tennant – the actor spoke to *HorrorHound* in an exclusive interview about his role in the vampire film. We caught up with him during the final day of rehearsals for *Much Ado About Nothing*.

**HorrorHound:** So what made you want to do *Fright Night* and were you a fan of the original, as Colin Farrell revealed he was?

**David Tennant:** I wouldn't say I knew it particularly, but I was aware of it. I think I was too young to see it, at least legally, when it came out. But I remember the very iconic poster, the face over the house – it was a very striking image.

But I wasn't a particular fan of it. I just sort of caught up with it after the event. I got approached and it sounded like something I didn't want to miss. Very exciting to be a part of a big vampire movie. Then I met up with Craig Gillespie and Anton and I thought this was something I wanted to be a part of. And when you see the rest of the cast like Colin Farrell and Christopher Mintz-Plasse and Imogen Poots, it's going to be quite special I think. I haven't seen the finished product yet but the bits I've seen I'm very excited about.

**HH:** I know your character gets beat up quite a bit in this film. How did the physicality in this compare to *Doctor Who*? I saw some photos that I probably wasn't supposed to see and it looked pretty intense.

**DT:** Well, there were certain similarities. There were some crazy corridors to walk up and down and I'm no stranger to that. Bashing with the old supernatural demons, which is similar in a lot of ways to *Doctor Who* moments.

But I guess when you are dealing with a studio like Dreamworks, the scale is bigger, and frankly the budget is bigger. So everything was times 10. There was an extraordinary fire sequence towards the end and I was right in the middle of it. I was surrounded by these stuntmen doing these amazing things that you never thought was possible. Being amongst that ... it's so ... well, it's just a trip



DAVID TENNANT BECOMES "PETER VINCENT"

really. It's like being on a playground with better special effects.

**HH:** I did get to see some of that fire sequence when I was on-set, and it was spectacular.

**DT:** It was incredible!

**HH:** A lot of people were worried about how this character would be handled with you taking over for Roddy McDowall. You're no stranger to assuming an iconic role from another actor. How did you go about taking on this part?

**DT:** Well you know, I'm a huge fan of Roddy McDowall in all the things he

did. There was a TV show he did where they went through portals and things and there was a group of people [Fantastic Journey] ... but they showed that on TV when I was a kid, really quite a young kid. They would show this on mornings and school holidays, and I remember watching and seeing Roddy McDowall for the first time, and I would just think there was something quite remarkable about this brilliant actor.

Then of course I grew up and I found all of his work. He's a legend ... there's something magical about him. The idea of taking over from someone like that is quite intimidating if you think too keenly on it. You just have to think about it as This is a different character, this is a different time. But this character fills the same hole in the movie I guess. He's a very different Peter Vincent. He's got the same name, but he's different in many ways.

So you try not to focus too much on whether you can come up to the legendary status of someone like him and give it your best shot really.

**HH:** Now, I read that you had gone to a Chris Angel show in research for this movie.

**DT:** I did go to a Chris Angel show, but ... we have to be careful because people are assuming that I'm doing Chris Angel in this and I'm really not. He's a much more adept and successful illusionist than Peter Vincent in this movie.

I don't want Chris Angel thinking I'm trying to be him because I'm far removed from what he is. But I wanted to see a Las Vegas show; I wanted to see one of those magic shows. I'd never been to one, so I thought it was important to know what that world was. But no, Chris Angel is a darn sight more successful than our slightly tragic Peter Vincent.

**HH:** So what other research did you do for the magician role? Did you go out and search for tricks and sleight of hand things for it?

**DT:** A little bit. You know, I don't have to do a lot of magic, since a lot of that is done for me. So I didn't have to do a lot of prestidigitation or anything like that. But I did watch a lot of videos, I read a little bit, and I did go to Las Vegas to walk around and soak in the atmosphere a little bit. But at the same time, Marti Noxon had written this extraordinary character who sort of leaps off the page.

It was all there on the page. I didn't have to invent too much, it was all there. Another reason it was such a treat for me to do this. He's such a great character, such a damaged character ... quite a complicated and funny part for me to play.

**HH:** They've actually made him a lot more tragic than



the original. There is definitely a lot more loss to this guy than the original.

**DT:** Ohhhh ... oh, yes. He's ruined.

**HH:** And I did sneak a peek at something online about him where he likes a specific sort of alcohol. Do you drink a lot of Midori Sours?

**DT:** Oh, I do, I do! I drank several gallons of, I don't know what it was ... it was one of your lovely American energy drinks. I think about my sugar intake over the days we filmed those scenes ... I don't want to look at my glycemic index because I'm sure it was in the high gazillions. I consumed quite a lot of that stuff. I was very buzzy.

**HH:** So it sounds like you stuck closely to what was given to you with the character. During filming did you do anything of your own or did you primarily stick to the script?

**DT:** When you read it the first time, it gives you something to sink your teeth into. And the way that Craig works is he would always let the camera run on, and then have us do another one and say, "Let's see what we've got here." There was quite a lot of scope, for just sort of letting it rest for a little bit at the end of scenes, or taking an idea that came up during filming and kind of running with it a little bit.

Which is actually quite intimidating when you find yourself on the set of this big movie and the director saying, "Go on make stuff up, let's see what else we've got!" I was working with Anton who is so funny, and quick and sharp, so the scenes with him became quite fun. Marti Noxon came to visit on set one day and I thought she'd be furious, but she couldn't have been more encouraging that we played around with it. It's all inspired by her brilliant work. Of course, I haven't seen the finished product yet, but there were some bits that were just us messing around on set. Craig was very good at directing things in the right way.

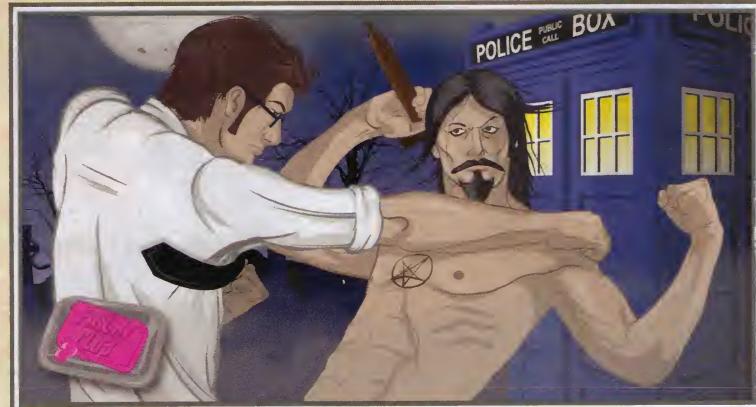
**HH:** It sounds like this is a good balance of the comedic and the horror like the original was.

**DT:** I hope so. That was certainly the intention. I think that was always going to be the trickiest thing with this movie was finding the tone. Because when it's scary, it's got to be properly terrifying. When you see Colin in his full vampire getup, it's breathtaking and it's done properly. Those action sequences are fantastic and fueled with real energy and real horror and everything that you'd want to see. And at the same time it's got to be ... it's got a lightness of touch I hope, and a deftness exactly like the old movie did, but I hope with a kindness as well.

**HH:** Horror movies seem to be a throwaway genre to a lot of people. But within so many of them you see these allegories and things, such as in this one, we see Charley coming to terms with his life and coming into his own as a man. A lot like sci-fi, people seem to think there's not a lot going on beneath the surface.

**DT:** I think it's an interesting thing we do in our culture. We slightly dismiss a lot of art forms as being disposable or unworthy. But the things that live in our culture, the things that people have a real emotional attachment to are those things – those movies that you fall in love with, the movies that you see as a kid.

I suppose I say this coming from a background of a science-fiction show that has had a run of 50 years which people have, certainly in Britain, and to an extent, around



the world have. ...

**HH:** He has his own mythology, the Doctor is mythic.

**DT:** Indeed. And those stories, and those shows and those movies that we see and form an attachment to are the most important of our life – and that we'll ever know. They form who we are. I think it is easy to dismiss horror and sci-fi as a disposable art form, but actually, it means so much to so many people that I think it is important as what might be called the higher art forms. It's all

part of the human experience, and it's a thrill.

**HH:** And you get to be more free with it. You can cover it up with the sheer of special effects and what have you, but it's still a human story and you can visualize what you want into it, you can put yourself there. And that really is what it's about.

**DT:** Absolutely. It's make-believe for grown-ups.

**HH:** In regards to *Fright Night*, if you can pick one scene as a favorite which one would it be?

**DT:** Oh, that's very hard. I loved the final sequence. But I also loved all the scenes in Peter's Las Vegas lair high above the Hard Rock Hotel. Just because they were so brilliantly written – so fun to work with Anton and Imogen and Craig. It was a real fun, exciting and creative time. I cannot wait to see the finished product really.

**HH:** So did you have a favorite prop since Peter has an arsenal of goodies.

**DT:** God, there were hundreds, too many to mention. I think the prop guys were trying to outdo each other with more elaborate vampire-killing paraphernalia. What was really lovely for me, especially being the Brit who lands in New Mexico and suddenly has to prove himself ... when I first stepped onto the set which was Peter's sort of vampire-mythology museum, all the little tags ... which will never be seen on camera, it was just a touch by the design department ... all the labels on all the display cabinets were all sorts of things from *Doctor Who* – because they said I needed to feel at home.

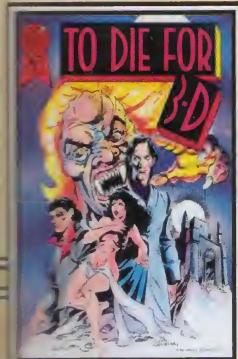
Not that anyone will ever know from watching the movie. I don't know, maybe you'll freeze a screen on your high-definition movie, but you'll read things like The Seal of Rassilon or the Hand of Omega. But there were all sorts of things like that. There were obviously some fanboys working back there.

**HH:** Well, that's testament to the all-around love of genres right there.

**DT:** Quite right. We geeks are taking over the world. 



PETER VINCENT PUTS ON HIS VAMPIRE SHOW!



**To Die For 3-D** (1989): Released as part of Blackthorne Publishing's 3-D Series (#64 out of 80), *To Die For* was based on the 1988 vampire film starring Amanda Wyss, Sydney Walsh and Brendan Hughes.

# I AM NANCY

by Jessica Dwyer

No one could really argue the effect that Freddy Krueger has had on the horror genre. The man in the fedora with the wickedly sharp glove and even sharper wit has become a legend. He's on par with Dracula, Frankenstein's Monster, and the Wolfman as the greats of our favorite film genre. But Freddy wasn't alone in getting to these lofty heights. And while many have studied his character and the meaning behind his appeal as well as what he represents (the boogeyman, our fears made burned flesh, etc.) the character that was his nemesis over the course of three films never got as much attention as he did.

Nancy Thompson, the heroic and tragic teenage girl, fought Freddy on his own turf and helped make the legend of Freddy what it is. Played by actress Heather Langenkamp, Nancy was one of the smartest and gutsiest girls to ever face a killer in a horror film. She was the epitome of a survivor girl, studying methods to do just that and fighting Freddy Krueger with all she had. Nancy had everything taken from her as she watched, no one believing her claims of a man trying to kill her in her dreams. But she overcame all of it to beat Freddy in the end of the first film. Nancy's strength of will came from a life that at its core was beyond harsh. She was the daughter of an alcoholic, she'd been (if you read between the lines) molested by Krueger, and her parents were divorced, unhappily so. Nancy had to contend with nearly every bad event a kid could go through growing up. And that was before the killer dream demon entered her life.

If you think about it in those terms, the character of Nancy Thompson may be one of the most-heroic female characters to ever be portrayed in a horror film. It's inspiring to see someone fight those type of odds and that's what fuels the documentary *I Am Nancy*. Langenkamp herself produced the film that follows her as she explores the real story behind Nancy and attends numerous horror conventions over the course of several months to determine why people love *A Nightmare on Elm Street* by asking the fans themselves. Where the film could (and many have) paint horror movie fans in a negative light, *I Am Nancy* shows the real people who attend the shows.

It's respectful and actually a touching testament to why we love horror films and what each of us personally takes away from them. Some of the stories that Heather heard are pretty amazing. One fan says she sees herself fighting her own rapist during the scene of Nancy defending herself from Freddy in the rose bushes (and finding strength in that battle), another lost both her legs in an accident and shows more courage than a hundred movie heroines as she talks about how she moved on through it. *I Am Nancy* shows a side to horror fans that a lot of people just don't ever get to see. In addition to the typical history lesson on the film, the documentary presents insight from the maker, Wes Craven, who shares his inspiration for the character of Nancy. As Heather interviews both Craven and his daughter, they tell stories about filming the classic horror movie and what they both have learned from it over the years. Heather Langenkamp discussed some of her thoughts on the documentary with *HorrorHound*:

**HorrorHound:** So at this point you've now done almost every aspect of filmmaking – acting, producing, and you've been involved with special effects through your husband's company. How did you progress into doing all of this?

**Heather Langenkamp:** Well, I've always pretty much been interested in doing everything. The problem with me is if I see something that looks interesting and fun to do, I'll often just drop whatever I'm doing just to kind of check it out and look into it. I've always been interested in doing lots of different things.

Acting was my number one passion when I was just starting out. I had so many lucky breaks; it was easier for me than a lot of other people who've tried to be actors. One of my first roles being in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* has been kind of hard to believe in a lot of ways.

I'm also a very practical person and my husband is a makeup artist who had a business that was sort of surging ahead and he was getting lots of big jobs. So I thought I could just sit around feeling sorry for myself that I'm not acting or getting great auditions or I could team up with him and grow our business and take on some really great projects.

This is the first time in 20 years that I found I had the time to focus on a project like this. It really has been all consuming in a lot of ways.

**HH:** It really looks it. How many conventions did you go to during the filming?

**HL:** We shot the movie in the year that was the 25th anniversary of *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. It was a big year for the "Elm Street" cast to be invited to horror conventions. I'd always been invited in the past to maybe one or two a year, but that year, it seemed like every city wanted Robert Englund and Heather Langenkamp.

We did six conventions that year – a few of them Robert was at and some of them he wasn't. We developed a list of bits – like we really wanted to interview a toy vendor, and we really wanted to interview Robert and get some footage of his lines. So a basic list of things we wanted to shoot. That was sort of a jumping-off point. We wound up taking hundreds of hours of footage of fans and their kids and their grandparents, showing the multigenerational appeal of this movie.

Usually older family members introduce younger family members to the movie – not only to bridge the generation, but to turn them onto something that they had really loved. I love that aspect of these conventions – how they've become more family oriented.

**HH:** People don't expect that at these shows, but it's true. There's really a family vibe to horror conventions.

**HL:** There's definitely a group of hip and single people who come to have a wild weekend. There's also this very heartwarming and kind-of-sweet, intergenerational thing going on where people are bringing their little kids to meet Freddy Krueger.

As a family person myself that's just something that I don't think a lot of people would believe or they don't know is going on in America. There are other things like that too, like the tattoo culture that has grown so much in the last 10 or 15 years. I thought that was fascinating where all these young kids want to get monster tattoos, so I was really curious about that.

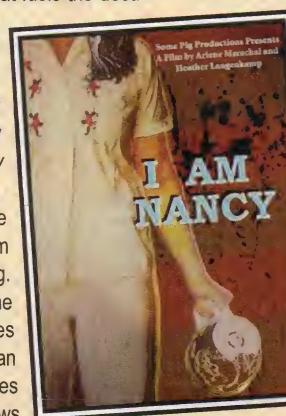
We also met a lot of fans who went really deep with my questions. I would ask them, "So what's your Freddy?" and they would go, "oh my school work or my boss at work." But a few fans gave us some great insight on how they liked to identify their problems in the terms of seeing their struggles as their "Freddy."

You might have seen on my blog where I would say, "this is my Freddy today," and it would be something that I was really really frustrated about. That came about from many, many fans; I would say, "What's your Freddy?" and immediately they would come up with something. And like I said, there were a few fans that came up with some answers that really touched me.

So I'm thinking, if this movie can give some kids an anchor in dealing with their tough problems, that's the message that I hope a lot of people can walk away with. It's not just fun and games, there's actually an inspirational message.

All of us have problems; all of us have a "Freddy." You know, face it or turn away from it. Nancy faced it ... why don't we all just do it that way? Nancy was successful, so I've tried to turn Nancy into this symbol of facing your fear, facing that thing that is really getting in your way and threatening to derail your whole life.

In some instances, you just need to recognize it and recognize how powerful it is, and then you just need to run right at it like Nancy would. Just jump on it and attack it. That's what "Nancy" is; it's the trait that she had. What I hope is when people see *A Nightmare on Elm Street* that's what they take away from it. 



**Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare** (1991): In 1991, Innovation Publishing released three comic book series based on *A Nightmare on Elm Street* before the company filed for bankruptcy in 1992.

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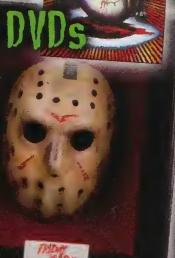
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# AN EXCLUSIVE LOOK AT TEEN WOLF

by Eric Newell

If horror fans aren't exactly "excited" about the new MTV series *Teen Wolf*, you can't really blame them. For someone who's a fan of things that go bump in the night, there is much to be wary of on the surface. I had plenty of doubts in my own mind when popping in a screener of the pilot episode.

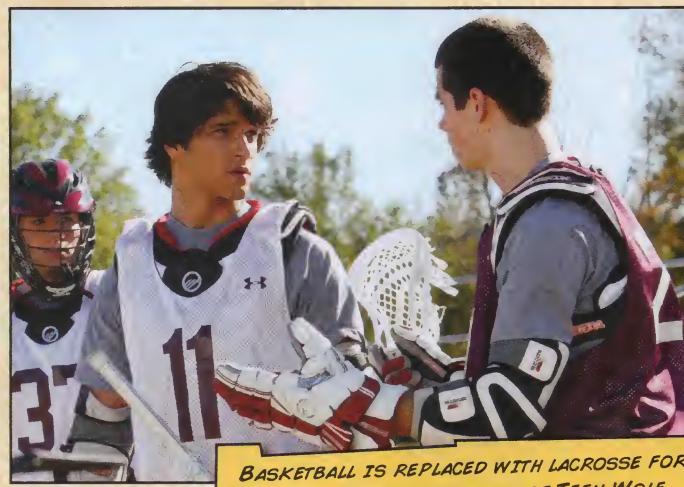
It's a remake of a beloved '80s classic for starters. It's hard to imagine that the channel who makes its money off shows like *Jersey Shore* and *Teen Mom* can make anything approaching scary. And with the proliferation of steamy romance-oriented monster shows on television these days, it's easy to see where a network geared toward teens could take this property in a direction that would be less than pleasing to horror fans. The only thing is ... that's not what they've done.

Once the show starts airing, the comparisons to today's schmaltzy monster shows are sure to fall by the wayside, with discussion instead shifting toward the dark action and atmosphere. But for now, as we sit down with Jeff Davis, Exec producer on the show and creator of the hit CBS series *Criminal Minds*, and the man who directed the pilot, award-winning director Russell Mulcahy, one gets the feeling that the inevitable comparisons are starting to take their toll.

"We're tired of the *Vampire Diaries* and *Twilight* comparisons," Jeff says, following up by saying that he's glad to finally be doing an interview for a publication with the word "Horror" in the name.

If you're looking for something to compare it to, Davis may surprise you with his answer. "Peter Parker," of *Spider-Man* fame, he says confidently. "He [Tyler Posey] gets bitten and he's bestowed with unusual supernatural abilities, and it makes his life better. It's not quite the brooding vampire story."

The Peter Parker comparison makes sense. Instead of being bitten by a radio-active spider and becoming a superhero, Scott McCall (played by Posey) notices that he's suddenly hearing and seeing things that no one else can. More importantly, his newfound speed has shot him onto the starting line of his high



*Werewolf* (1988): A rare find for TV horror fans, Blackthorne Publishing released a five-issue mini-series based on the *Werewolf* television series which aired on Fox between 1987 and 1988.

school lacrosse team, and presumably as episodes go on, the top of the social ladder as well. It's all new and scary for Scott, but you get the feeling that he instantly recognizes the potential it has to improve his life.

Unfortunately, this fun, action-oriented aspect of the show was barely touched on in MTV's initial teaser campaign. The spots instead focused on a shot of a brooding, shirtless McCall staring at the camera with his yellow, lupine eyes. It screamed *Twilight*, and could have been ripped straight from a poster for *New Moon*. And while the show does have a romantic plotline, it's not the kind of

mouth-breathing, crazy cat-lady romance you'd typically associate with the Stephanie Meyer series. This is a dark, horror-oriented TV show that isn't afraid to go after a scare.

Director Russell Mulcahy (*Highlander*) has played a large part in bringing that darkness to the screen. He, who so far has directed a total of six episodes of the series, has a long history with MTV. He was a key figure in pushing music video as an artform in the late 1970s. His video for the Buggles track *Video Killed the Radio Star* was the first thing to air on MTV back in 1981. He also won the first "Moon Man" ever given out at the inaugural Video Music Awards. His career in music continued through most of the 1980s, including a bit of foreshadowing when he directed the video for Duran Duran's "Hungry Like the Wolf." More recently he dabbled in zombies, directing *Resident Evil: Extinction*.

He was initially only supposed to direct the pilot, but after winning over Jeff Davis with his passion for horror and skills behind the camera, was lured on to serve as an additional producer. "He and I had this kind of natural connection," Jeff says, "And after the pilot I told Russell that he had to come and be a producer on the show as well, and I want you to direct as many episodes as humanly possible. He will be back as long as I can convince him to keep taking this ridiculously low pay," Davis says laughing.

Money doesn't seem to be that big of an issue for Russell, at least at this point. "It's the love factor," he says. "It's a genre that both Jeff and I love, and the story is wonderful to tell. There's so much more to tell in the coming seasons."

MTV has not currently picked the show up for a second season, but Davis hopes if it finds an audience, there will be a chance to tell more of their story. The show is certainly a departure for MTV, who many in the industry claim is about to make a big shift toward scripted programming.

"I think the network has realized that scripted is the way to go," Jeff explains. "They're the kind of network that reinvents itself every 10 years, and I think they do an amazing job at that." At this point Russell jumps in, MTV being a subject dear to his heart. "They have their finger on the pulse," he assures us. "They're a network that's willing to take risks, and there's only a few networks out there that are willing to do that." Plus, as Jeff adds, "They've given us incredible support, I've never had a network be so behind something. I always say that if a network like AMC can have two of the





TYLER POSEY IS AN ANIMAL!

best shows on television, *Breaking Bad* and *Madmen*, then why not MTV?"

The network's support of *Teen Wolf* is readily apparent by the passionate players they've hired to bring it to life, but it remains to be seen if it's something fans support. Being on MTV, it will presumably find a slice of the younger audience organically, by virtue of being on in the right place at the right time. For a niche show like *Teen Wolf*, however, the more hard-core horror fans could be the group to push it over the edge ratings wise.

One question they seem to have is, what does this show have to do with the original Michael J. Fox film? While the original *Teen Wolf* (1985) was a largely comic affair (Were-bowling!), this reboot (or "remix" as Davis says) will try to stay closer to the horror side. "The first movie is actually a comedy," he says. "And in actuality it's kind of a basketball movie. At the end of the film, there are no werewolves in sight, just Scott Howard getting that last basketball shot."

He continues, "They said they wanted to make it a little scarier, a little sexier, and I said we should do it kind of like *The Lost Boys*, which to me was both very scary, very romantic as well, but really funny. So that was kind of the paradigm we used." Davis also promises plenty of "Easter Eggs" sprinkled throughout, for the fans not quite ready to give up on their beloved '80s classic.

And much like the original, strong themes of puberty abound. "The teenage years are certainly one of the major transformational times in life, hair growing in strange places and all that," Davis says. "There's a certain sense of not being able to control yourself as well, which most teenagers feel at one point or another." In a way, certain parts of the pilot are reminiscent of the 2000 Canadian werewolf film *Ginger Snaps*, a low-budget classic which took the "puberty as allegory for lycanthropy" theme to extremes not seen before. To a certain extent, *Teen Wolf* is looking to pick up that torch, albeit a little less graphically.

One pleasantly surprising fact we learned while researching the show, is that none other than KNB Effects are

handling the monster and gore work for the production, something horror fans are sure to be pleased about. "They are incredibly talented people," Jeff says. KNB designed several different werewolves for the show, from Posey's half-human wolf to a full-on monster wolf that Davis says we'll see "later" on in the first season. Being on television, the budget is tight, but they're doing what they can. "We're pushing it as far as we can go with our budget," Jeff adds. "We're making every penny count."

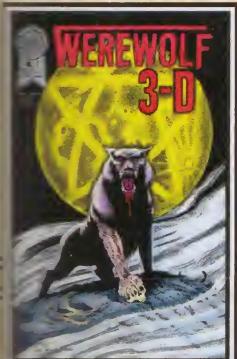
So what will the mix of CGI and practical effects be? "We do both actually. We use CGI mostly to supplement the transformations. Russell and I are both big fans of practical effects."

"When it comes to that "old-school" transformation, Russell chimes in, "we also tried to add a new cinematic quality, to add a freshness to that technique so it will be surprising. 'Surprising' is always a word that I kept very strong in my head, trying to surprise and intrigue the audience, both by the visuals and storyline."

"Surprise" might be the optimal word for what *Teen Wolf* could do upon its debut, which will already have happened by the time you read this. The show premiered on June 5th at 11p.m., right after the MTV Music Awards, before sliding into its normal timeslot, Monday nights at 10p.m. The later time could give them room to push boundaries with content, even if they can't have quite the violence or nudity of their pay-cable brethren like *True Blood*. If the show succeeds, it could not only mean more scripted fare for MTV, but possibly more horror-themed content on the horizon. (Perhaps that *Herbert West: Re-Animator* television series that has been shopped around?)

Jeff, ever aware that in talking to us he has a direct line to horror fans, gives his final plea: "I would say keep an open mind. I think you'll be surprised. Remember the show comes from two genre lovers. When we sit down to write and to direct the show, we're not just sitting there thinking how we can pass bottom line for a gigantic corporation like Viacom, we're thinking how we can come up with a compelling story." Russell, for his part, adds, "And we do it with our hearts and our souls, and that's quite sincere. This is a job of love."

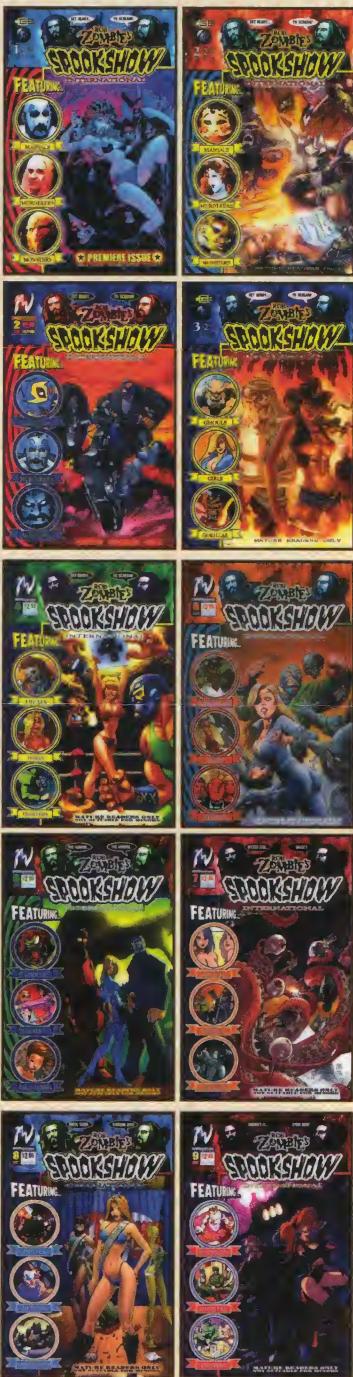
*Teen Wolf* airs Monday nights at 10p.m. on MTV.



**Werewolf 3-D** (1989): Released as part of BlackThorne Publishing's 3-D Series (#61 out of 80), *Werewolf 3-D* was based on the 1988 TV show starring John J. York, Chuck Connors and Lance LeGault.

## Spookshow International

Rob Zombie is the master of his domain. Whether it be tearing the house down during one of his amazing rock concerts, or drenching theater screens with blood in his latest horror effort. No one can deny that when Rob sinks his teeth into a project, you get something wholly entertaining and gut-wrenching. It was no surprise that in 2003, when Rob launched his own *Spookshow International* comic book series, that it would rule comic shelves. Here is a look back at this nine-issue comic book run published by MVCreation and featuring some familiar faces, as well as a certain smart-ass masked wrestler secret agent who went on to star in his own Rob Zombie-scripted DTV movie.



Also look for variants for issue 1 and 2 as well as a Comic-Con exclusive for issue #9.

# INDIE SPOTLIGHT IN REVIEW

• by Jason Hignite

If you made a list of some of my favorite films of the last 10 years (*Shrooms*, *Let the Right One In*, *House of the Devil*, *Hobo with a Shotgun*, *Wendigo*, etc.) all of them will have one thing in common ... they were distributed by Magnet Releasing. Magnet is the genre division of Magnolia Pictures, focusing on vanguard and avant garde horror, dark comedy, action and Asian cinema. Magnet has consistently brought to theaters and home video some of the most interesting and entertaining movies from all over the world.

## *I Saw the Devil*

I will start by saying that *I Saw the Devil* is one of those rare movies that you don't "watch" – you "experience." A lot of the scenery and the larger premise of the film are so disturbing that the casual viewer may shut it off out of anger or disgust. However, if you allow yourself to look at what is happening to the characters as the story unfolds, to look past the gore and carnage, you find the brilliance in the film is the erosion of reason in response to tragic loss.

*I Saw the Devil* is a psychological thriller from one of Korea's most-celebrated filmmakers, Ji-woon Kim (*A Tale of Two Sisters*). The story focuses on the relationship between Soo-hyeon Kim (Byung-hun Lee; *G.I. Joe*), a highly trained special agent, and Kyun-Chul (Min-sik Choy; *Oldboy*), a sadistic, deranged, school-bus-driving, psycho killer. The film begins abruptly with Kyun-Chul abducting and murdering Soo-hyeon's fiancee. Soo-hyeon immediately takes a leave of absence to mourn; however, his countenance quickly turns from justice to vengeance as he seeks out her killer. Admittedly, this is a very common premise, stereotypical of any good revenge film. Yet, Kim deliberately intends to take the viewer deeper into the true horror of the situation – the loss, the guilt, the decent into methodical depravity induced by terror.

It doesn't take long for Soo-hyeon to discover the killer, who you find not only has a compulsive need to lure, degrade, and mutilate attractive young girls, but to assault, intimidate, and even murder just about anyone he comes across. Kyun-Chul is the epitome of evil, and it is at this point that the movie takes its watershed turn. Instead of killing Kyun-Chul, Soo-hyeon embarks on an elaborate path of cat-and-mouse punishment. Soo-hyeon stalks Kyun-Chul, allowing him to fulfill his dark passions. However, Soo-hyeon shows up during or after each event to punish Kyun-Chul, taking more blood and flesh for each transgression.

Soo-hyeon becomes the stoic, cold-blooded, methodical sadist that he sought to destroy, allowing innocent victims to fall into the hands of Kyun-Chul just so a selfish sense of brutal vengeance can be served. Any human emotion, at this point in the film, is expressed by Kyun-Chul ... pain, frustration, even laughter. The juxtaposition of these characters is brilliant in that the typical character constructs are inverted, nearly to the point of establishing "the killer" as the protagonist. Therefore, *I Saw the Devil* does not refer to peering into the eyes of "the bad guy," but is a look into what one can become when hatred builds within.



## *Black Death*

A plague has ravaged 14th century Europe and a group of mercenary warriors is sent by the church to investigate a small village that seems immune to "the pestilence." Bearing a resemblance to the Templar, the group is responding to stories of witchcraft and necromancy. A young monk, Osmund (Eddie Redmayne; *The Good Shepherd*), joins the group, leading them into the marsh where the village is located. Osmund is also fighting his own darkness – the love of a woman that is forbidden.

The film also stars David Warner (*Tron*) and Sean Bean (*Silent Hill*) who has probably spent more time in chain mail than blue jeans with the films he has made in the last 10 years.

*Black Death* deals with heavy medieval Christian and pagan mythologies; yet, presents them in a respectfully accurate way. Director Christopher Smith (*Creep*, *Severance*, *Triangle*) takes a departure from horror to present this dark tale of fear and hatred. The battle choreography is fantastic and there is no skimping on the gore. Beautifully shot and well told, this combination of *The 13th Warrior* and *The Name of the Rose* should curb your otherwise horror-laden appetite when you hunger for medieval munchies.

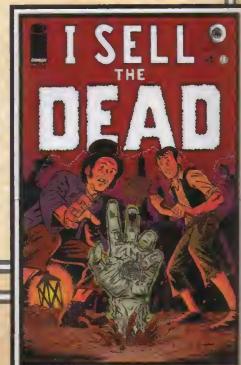


## *13 Assassins*

At the end of Japan's feudal era, Lord Naritsugu begins to rise in political power. However, his sadistic blood lust and desire for a return to war has attracted the attention of a group of "unemployed" samurai. Surrounded by hundreds of samurai guards, these 13 assassins delve into a suicide mission to eliminate Naritsugu and keep peace in Japan. The first half of the film is eloquent in its plot and character development. It is rare that a film forces you to hate a villain as much as you hate Naritsugu (played by Gorô Inagaki). The last half of the film is non-stop, high-concept martial arts action.

Known for some of the best Japanese horror of the last decade (*Audition* and *Ichi the Killer*), director Takashi Miike delivers a film rich in samurai culture of honor and duty. GoreHounds will love the SFX – beheadings, vivisection and amputations abound.

*13 Assassins* pulls you into the story and action, leaving you physically and mentally exhausted, yet satisfied, at its conclusion.



*I Sell the Dead* (2009): Image Comics produced a single issue comic based on the 2008 indie film, *I Sell the Dead*, which starred Dominic Monaghan, Ron Perlman, Larry Fessenden and Angus Scrimm.

**TrollHunter (aka: Trolljegeren)**

From Norwegian filmmaker André Øvredal comes Norway's version of *The Blair Witch Project*. When a rash of bizarre bear killings occur in a rural Norway province, a group of college film students decide to document the strange occurrences. Bear hunting is strictly regulated in Norway and licensed bear hunters are convinced there is a poacher. The film crew identifies a suspect and attempts to interview him. But, they quickly learn there is something much more dangerous than bears in the woods.

The Norwegian government has been keeping the troll population at bay, as well as completely secret, for decades ... even going so far as to run high-tension powerlines through unpopulated areas to act as security fences. But, when the trolls get out of hand, they call Hans (Otto Jespersen), the TrollHunter. Attacks on humans and livestock are masked as bear attacks. A bear is killed and placed near the scene of the incident, the Minister of Wildlife makes a report from the scene, and all is well. However, our group of film students, Thomas (Glenn Erland Tosterud), Kalle (Tomas Alf Larsen) and Johanna (Johanna Mørck) are not satisfied. Following Hans into the woods, the crew ends up face to face with a fairy-tale nightmare.

*TrollHunter* does a great job of mixing farcical

moments in with the suspense. Hans is a complete curmudgeon which is offset by Thomas' over-optimism. Even the trolls are bound by a set of fantasy-esque rules ... sunlight turns them to stone ... they can smell the blood of a christian (which becomes even more farcical when a muslim joins the group). However, there is nothing comical when the trolls attack ... especially with one event that I was not prepared for.

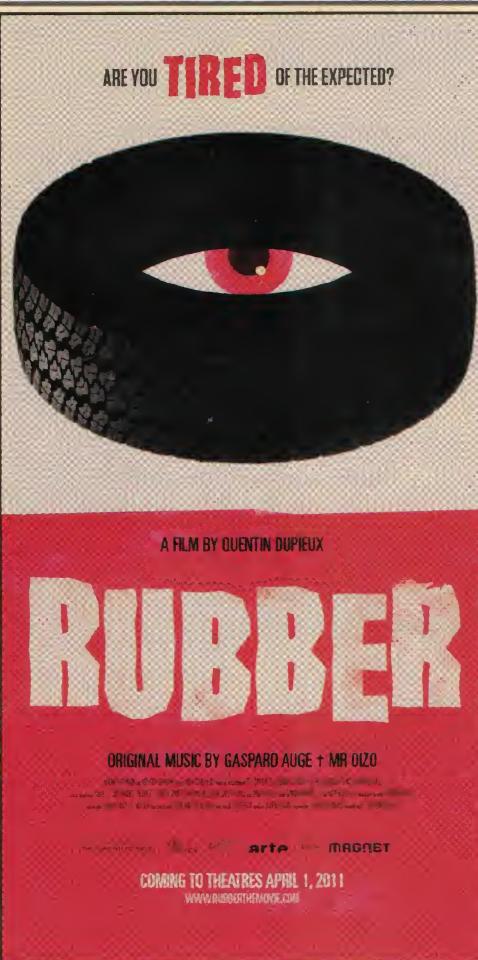
Technically, the movie works very well. The POV style takes into account the limitations of the hand-held equipment and uses it to the film's advantage. Subtle nuances lend to its credibility. The introduction of additional camera operators includes differing styles of camera work. The CGI is good – in fact, I would give it a "B," although some of the animations seems too "cartoony." The low-tech format of the POV-documentary style of the film does mask some of this.

By all means ... watch this movie. The acting is perfect for this style of film. Otto Jespersen (or, O.J., as he is known in Norway) is brilliant. And, if you are not a big fan of subtitled movies, fear not. Ta Da ... an American remake of the film is already in negotiations. Yes ... trolls in America! Might as well, we have already milked the hell out of a leprechaun!

**Rubber**

Welcome to the completely bizarre. If Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* is your idea of a light, Sunday afternoon movie, *Rubber* is definitely for you. This film never really explains itself ... and makes no apologies for it. In it, you meet Robert, who is just coming into a full realization of himself, and, just like Jesus and Jim Morrison, he "finds himself" in the desert. Discovering an ability to telepathically blow up a person's (and a rabbit's) head, Robert makes himself a presence in a small desert town. Under the watchful eye of an opinionated studio audience, Robert sets out on a journey of blood and revolution. There is just one small plot point that really affects the flow of the film ... Robert is a tire ...

Okay ... so ... "plot" and "flow" are two words that are difficult to use in describing this film in a traditional sense. Director Quentin Dupieux ventures into a fairly uncharted territory, a fresh style of story telling ... more stream-of-consciousness than anything. Dupieux disengages the viewer right off the bat with a monologue from Police Lieutenant Chad (Stephen Spinella; *The Jackal*, *Ravenous*, *Virtuosity*). Breaking the fourth wall, Chad explains that every great film requires a level of "no reason" for it to work. Citing examples from various films; for instance, in *E.T.*, why was the alien brown? There is probably no

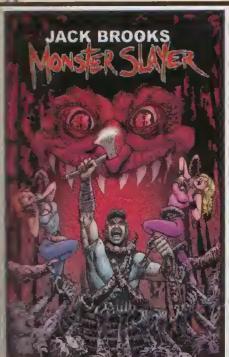


reason. This monologue sets up the rest of the film where the idea of "no reason" prevails. This cinematic commentary follows throughout the film with the inherent "audience," donned with binoculars, watching the movie unfold from afar. Through this, Dupieux provides the viewer multiple thought processes when viewing the film ... even covering film-viewing etiquette with the other "viewers" shushing the one who is speaking.

With an impressive ensemble cast, *Rubber* also features Jack Plotnick (*Gods and Monsters*, *Meet the Fockers*), Wings Hauser (a guest actor on almost every television series going back to *Baretta*), and Ethan Cohn (*Alice in Wonderland*, *Lady in the Water*) to name just a few.

*Rubber* is definitely an exercise in film viewing ... perhaps that is the point. Some scenes are very slow and deliberate, borderlining on boring. The film explores voyeurism, obsession, swimming pools, and food – and about a thousand other disconnected themes. This is not for your casual movie viewer. If your favorite movie is *Dude Where's My Car?* you may want to pass. However, there are enough recognizable aspects of a traditional horror film to keep most of the peripheral audience engaged. The gore is great and the suspense is playful. So, if your will to be weird is strong ... *Rubber*!

For more information on these and other Magnet-released features, visit them online at [www.magnetreleasing.com](http://www.magnetreleasing.com).

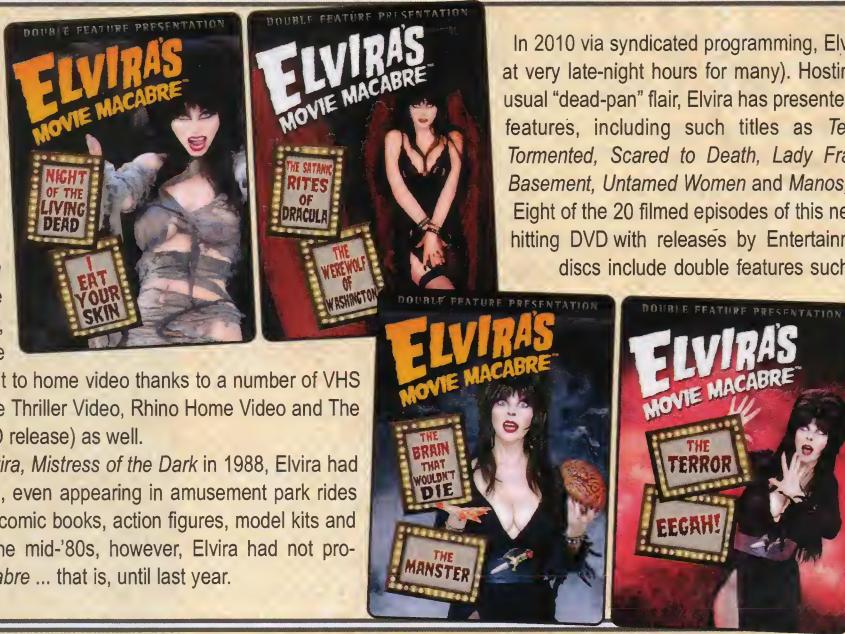


**Jack Brooks Monster Slayer** (2009): A promotional comic book for "Jack Brooks" was given to attendees at the Slamdance Film Festival in '09, while it was later released in digital format online.

## Elvira's Movie Macabre

Having first launched *Elvira's Movie Macabre* in 1981 in Los Angeles (replacing Sinister Seymour's *Fright Night*, which had been off the air for over five years), the horror-themed valley girl soon became the hit of Horrorwood. Appearing on such shows as *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson* and becoming the spoksperson for Coors Light Beer, *Elvira's Movie Macabre* stayed on the air through 1986 and eventually went to home video thanks to a number of VHS distribution deals with companies like Thriller Video, Rhino Home Video and The Shout! Factory (which later saw DVD release) as well.

With the theatrical release of *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark* in 1988, Elvira had officially become a household name, even appearing in amusement park rides and being the focus of a number of comic books, action figures, model kits and costume/makeup ventures. Since the mid-'80s, however, Elvira had not produced a new episode of *Movie Macabre* ... that is, until last year.



In 2010 via syndicated programming, Elvira returned to television (albeit at very late-night hours for many). Hosting public-domain films with her usual "dead-pan" flair, Elvira has presented no less than 20 public-domain features, including such titles as *Teenagers from Outer Space*, *Tormented*, *Scared to Death*, *Lady Frankenstein*, *Don't Look in the Basement*, *Untamed Women* and *Manos*, *The Hands of Fate*.

Eight of the 20 filmed episodes of this new series of *Movie Macabre* are hitting DVD with releases by Entertainment One (eOne). These new discs include double features such as George Romero's *Night*

*the Living Dead* with *I Eat Your Skin*, *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* with *The Werewolf of Washington* (both discs are now available), *The Terror* with *Eegah!* and *The Brain that Wouldn't Die* with *The Manster* (both discs coming August 16, 2011).

## 10 Random QUESTIONS WITH Ted Nicolaou

by Kenneth Nelson

In every issue of *HorrorHound* we take the time to hunt down a film director within the world of horror to ask a series of 10 seemingly random questions. Whether revolving around said director's body of work, their latest projects or simply what kind of cereal they had for breakfast – no question is too daring (or silly) to ask! In the past we have been honored to have such directors as John Carpenter, Tobe Hooper, George Romero and Rob Zombie take part in this bi-monthly obsession. This issue we were lucky enough to steal a few minutes away from director Ted Nicolaou. Ted, of course, is most well known for his directorial duties on the *Subspecies* film series released throughout the 1990s, as well as the cult-classic monster movie *TerrorVision*, and other oddball titles such as *Vampire Journals* and *Dragonworld*. Enjoy as we delve into 10 Random Questions with Ted Nicolaou:

**HorrorHound:** What is the best restaurant you've ever eaten at?

**Ted Nicolaou:** Mare Nostrum in Turin, Italy, where we shot *The Etruscan Mask*. One sublime feast from the sea. Closer to home, Versailles on Venice Boulevard. Cuban roast chicken or pork, plantains, black beans and rice.

**HH:** What is your guiltiest pleasure when it comes to television programming?

**TN:** Grey's Anatomy. I blame my wife.

**HH:** If you had the opportunity to force all your family and friends to watch one movie in a theater together simultaneously, what flick would you choose?

**TN:** Orson Welles' *Touch of Evil*. I could watch that film a thousand times.

**HH:** What toy did you play with most as a child?

**TN:** Little plastic space men with a space station made of tin, painted with monitors and futuristic technologies. There were no poseable action figures then – all the spacemen were molded onto a plastic base. That space base plus a set of wood blocks spawned many space adventures in my bedroom.

**HH:** Where is the coolest place you've ever spent Halloween?

**TN:** In a Transylvanian hotel where the *Subspecies* crew was slowly going insane. Suddenly there were American voices in the lobby – a crowd of oddballs in costumes. Some dumpy American tourists and some winners of a Dracula-themed radio



contest in the US; they had come to attend a Halloween party at the Citadel of Brasov. They invited us to join them, but we declined, fearing some of them were witches and that the rest were going to be sacrificed.

**HH:** What movie does everyone else love that you just don't get the appeal for?

**TN:** Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives. The rave reviews made me want to see it, but from the first frame I didn't know what was going on.

**HH:** Out of all the films you've directed, which do you think would most benefit from a high-def restoration and release on Blu-ray?

**TN:** *TerrorVision*. MGM has restored it to HD – it streams on Netflix. I think every young person should see it at least once and tell their friends ... and older people should see it again.

**HH:** Is it true you provided the van for the original *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*?

**TN:** I packed all my stuff in it and migrated from Austin to Los Angeles like a Beverly Hillbilly and drove around LA in the packed van for weeks until I landed an apartment. A few years later, I tried to sell it – advertised as the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* van, but in those days there were not so many horror collectors in the world, so the ad mainly scared off buyers. I eventually sold it at a greatly reduced price to a martial arts school. I should have held onto it.

**HH:** Of all the actors you've directed over the years, who has gone on to a level of success that you simply couldn't have predicted?

**TN:** Chad Allen from *TerrorVision*. Not all child actors keep at it to adulthood.

**HH:** Which is most likely to happen someday – a *TerrorVision* sequel, another entry in the *Subspecies* saga, or a remake of *Leapin' Leprechauns*?

**TN:** It's a race of tortoises between a *TerrorVision* remake and the *Subspecies* prequel.

Thanks to Dominic Mancini for his assistance in this article.



## DVD & Blu-ray Release Schedule

Week-by-week schedule of all upcoming DVD and Blu-ray titles:

**July 05, 2011**

13 Assassins (DVD/BD)  
BloodRayne: The Third Reich (DVD/BD)  
Hellraiser: Hellworld (BD)  
Hobo with a Shotgun (DVD/BD)

**July 12, 2011**

Battle Beyond the Stars (DVD/BD)  
Damnation Alley (DVD/BD)  
Deadline Stories: V1 (DVD)  
Dinocroc vs. Supergator (DVD/BD)  
Insidious (DVD/BD)

**July 19, 2011**

Monsterwolf (DVD)  
The Reef (DVD/BD)  
Rifftrax Live: House on Haunted Hill (BD)

**July 26, 2011**

Dylan Dog (DVD/BD)  
Matrimony (BD)  
Puppet Monster Massacre (DVD)  
Supernatural: The Anime Series (DVD/BD)

**August 02, 2011**

Copycat (BD)  
The Name of the Rose (BD)  
MST3K vs. Gamera (DVD)  
Stake Land (DVD/BD)

**August 09, 2011**

Bikini Girls on Ice (DVD/BD)  
Camp Hell (DVD)

**August 16, 2011**

Dexter: Season 5 (DVD/BD)  
Final Destination, The (BD 3-D)  
Tenant, The (BD)  
Medium Raw (DVD)  
Ward, The (DVD/BD)

**August 23, 2011**

A Haunting in Salem 3D (DVD/BD)  
Eyes, The (DVD)  
House of Fallen (DVD/BD)  
Super Hybrid (DVD/BD)  
TrollHunter (DVD/BD)  
Women in Cages Collection (BD)

**August 30, 2011**

The 10th Victim (BD)  
Bereavement (BD)  
Incredible Shrinking Man, The (DVD/BD)  
Twilight Zone: Season 5 (BD)  
Vampire Diaries, The: Season 2 (DVD/BD)

**September 6, 2011**

Crow, The (BD)  
Hellbound: Hellraiser II (BD)  
Hills Have Eyes, The (BD)

**September 13, 2011**

Frighteners, The (BD)  
Supernatural: Season 6 (DVD/BD)

**September 20, 2011**

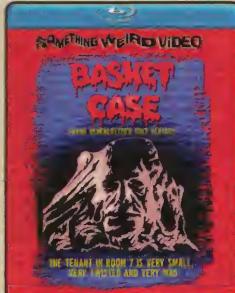
Chromeskull:  
Laid to Rest 2 (DVD/BD)  
Vamp (BD)

**September 27, 2011**

Basket Case (BD)  
House by the Cemetery (BD)  
Nightmare on Elm Street, A Parts 2 and 3 (Set; BD)  
Mother's Day (BD)

\* All titles listed above include new releases onto DVD or Blu-ray – formats are indicated in parentheses.

\*\* All release dates are subject to change.



**Basket Case**

(Image Entertainment)  
**Available:** Sept 27th  
**Extras:** A newly transferred high-def version of *Basket Case* (straight from the 16mm negative) hits Blu-ray thanks to Image Entertainment (via *Something Weird Video*); one of the neatest HD titles to street this year!  
**Format:** Blu-ray



**BloodRayne: The Third Reich**

(Phase 4 Films)  
**Available:** July 5th  
**Extras:** We know ... Uwe Boll ... but fans of *BloodRayne* will still be interested in picking up the director's cut of his latest installment, which includes a commentary, making-of, interview and two trailers.  
**Format:** DVD/Blu-ray



**Camp Hell**  
(Lionsgate)

**Available:** August 9th  
**Extras:** This DTV movie isn't a Jesse Eisenberg film (he is actually credited seventh on imbd) – although the studio obviously takes advantage of *The Social Network* star's recent fame on the cover. **Format:** DVD



**Dylan Dog: Dead of Night**

(Brandon Routh)  
**Available:** July 26th  
**Extras:** Fox announced the home video release of *Dylan Dog: Dead of Night* starring Brandon Routh, Anita Briem, Taye Diggs, and Peter Stormare. Unfortunately, no special features will be included with this film.  
**Format:** DVD/Blu-ray



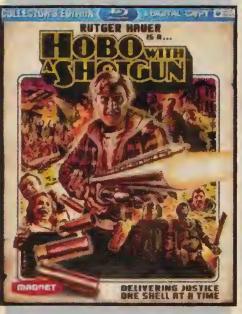
**Dexter: The Fifth Season**

(Paramount Pictures)  
**Available:** August 16th  
**Extras:** How do you follow up *Dexter*'s incredibly amazing fourth season? By adding Julia Stiles and Peter Weller to the cast! *Dex* helps a kidnap victim track down her captors. No extras were revealed as of press date.  
**Format:** DVD/Blu-ray

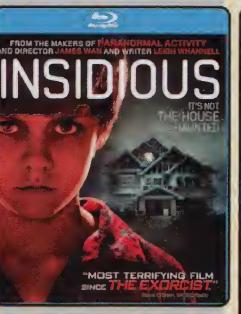


**INCLUDES 2 VERSIONS!**

**The Frighteners**  
(Universal Home Ent.)  
**Available:** Sept 13th  
**Extras:** Outside of the horrible BD cover – this disc comes packed with two versions of the film (theatrical and the director's cut), Peter Jackson intro, a making-of featurette, Peter Jackson commentary and storyboards.  
**Format:** Blu-ray



**Hobo with a Shotgun**  
(Magnet)  
**Available:** July 5th  
**Extras:** The Rutger Hauer Grindhouse spin-off includes alternate and deleted scenes, multiple making-ofs, commentary tracks, video blogs, trailers, as well as the original Grindhouse contest-winning trailer.  
**Format:** DVD/Blu-ray



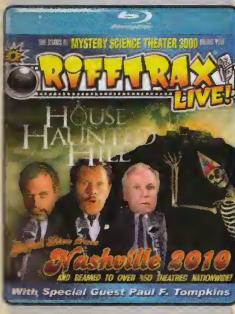
**Insidious**  
(Sony Home Ent.)  
**Available:** July 12th  
**Extras:** The 2011 surprise hit *Insidious* (from Saw director James Wan) will include an exclusive seminar: Horror 101, as well as two featurettes titled "On Set with *Insidious*" and "Insidious Entities." No other extras are revealed.  
**Format:** DVD/Blu-ray



**MST3K vs. Gamera**  
(The Shout! Factory)  
**Available:** August 2nd  
**Extras:** Surprise – The Shout! Factory is FINALLY releasing the fan favorite *Gamera* episodes of *MST3K*. All five episodes will be packaged in a tin-box set with featurettes on the shows included.  
**Format:** DVD



**Red Riding Hood**  
(Warner Home Video)  
**Available:** Now Available  
**Extras:** *Red Riding Hood* sees release in various formats, including a theatrical cut and "alternate cut." Extras on either disc include featurettes, deleted scenes, alternate ending, rehearsal footage, music videos and gag reels.  
**Format:** DVD/Blu-ray



**Rifftrax Live: House on Haunted Hill (Legend)**  
**Available:** July 19th  
**Extras:** Mike Nelson's *Rifftrax* Live premieres on BD with a show filmed in Nashville. No extras were announced at press date.  
**Format:** Blu-ray



**Sucker Punch**  
(Warner Home Video)  
**Available:** June 28th  
**Extras:** Zack Snyder's *Sucker Punch* will see home video release with an extended cut of the film, featuring 18 minutes of added material. A commentary, as well as an animated-short featurette (*Sucker Punch Prequel Stories*) are included.  
**Format:** DVD/Blu-ray



**Supernatural: The Anime Series**  
(Warner Bros.)  
**Available:** July 26th  
**Extras:** Yes – there is an anime series based on the *Supernatural* TV show (even featuring voice work by Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles). ... No extras were revealed, outside of the fact that this set includes 22 episodes of the animated series.  
**Format:** DVD/Blu-ray



**The Twilight Zone: Season 5**  
(Image Ent.)  
**Available:** August 30th  
**Extras:** If you have been purchasing Image's amazing Blu-ray sets for *The Twilight Zone* – what more can be said? Season 5 (the final season) includes more commentaries, commercials, interviews, promos, isolated music scores and so much more!  
**Format:** Blu-ray



**Wake Wood**  
(MPI Media Group)  
**Available:** June 28th  
**Extras:** Hammer Film's follow-up to last year's *Let Me In*, *Wake Wood* hits DVD and Blu-ray with amazing reviews! While no extras were revealed prior to print date, *HorrorHound* urges everyone to support Hammer's new crop of feature films!  
**Format:** DVD/Blu-ray

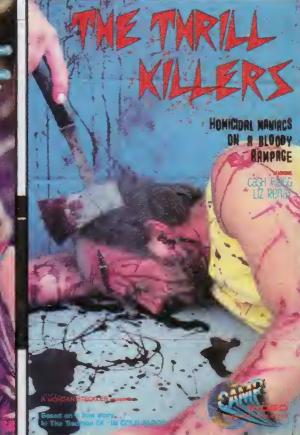
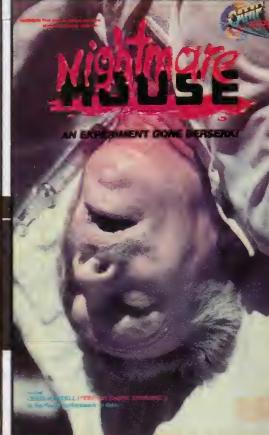
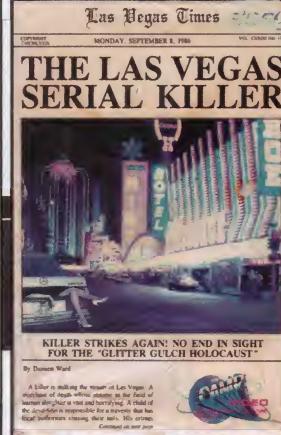
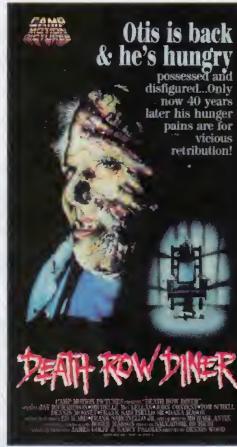


**Strangeland** (1999): A mini-comic from *Lady Death* creator Brian Pulido, featuring an interview with Dee Snider, this limited-run issue was packed inside copies of the *Strangeland* DVD from Artisan Entertainment.



**A** staph infection is a rather ugly condition one can contract just by touching the wrong thing.

I tend to think about that when I am digging around in the back stock room of an old video store – a legit fear considering some of the nastiness I have come across over my many years of collecting. But with every whiff of mildewy VHS tapes lies the hope of finding that special “Wow” video – that one moment that makes all the searching and odor enduring worthwhile. I had one of those moments back in 2004 while I was rummaging around a shop that had been a record store before becoming a video store during the VHS Boom. After finally succumbing to the lure of switching all of their titles to the DVD format, they were having a sale to rid themselves of these now-obsolete cassettes. Coincidentally, this store which I had randomly stumbled across, was one of the biggest buyers and supporters (on the East Coast) of a video company titled Camp Video. I discovered the company thanks to an unopened



box that I dug out of this store’s attic during my heroic hunt. The box (boasting a Camp Distribution return label) was actually a sealed case of fresh big box video tapes ... my heart sank! I went home with the mother lode that day – the best \$25 I had ever spent, anyway. Sure, I could have gotten a funky infection – but it would have been well worth it!

### History

Camp Video entered the scene during the mid-'80s, mostly with the products of inspired “filmmakers” of the time who were making their own horror films. Camp was in fact a sublabel of adult-film distributor LA Video – one of the bigger adult labels in the mid-'80s – and upon entering the nonadult marketplace, they offered shot-on-video horror – something that was unavailable at the time. Unfortunately, the shot-on-video horror film caught on and became common throughout the '80s and still has a decent following to this day. Thanks to online video stops such as YouTube, where many of these shot-on-

video horror titles like *Sledgehammer*, *The Ripper* and *Boardinghouse* currently reside, their fanbase only

continues to grow. What set Camp apart from their competitors, however, were their VHS covers – most of which were drenched in gore! Titles such as *Video Violence* and *Gore-Met Zombie Chef from Hell* were blood spattered – demanding shopper’s attention over the tamer neighboring titles sitting on video store shelves. With real gore fully on display (not painted covers like

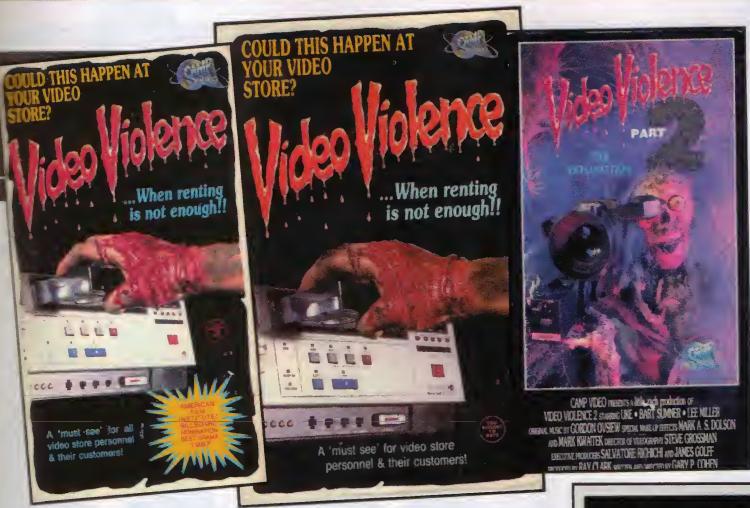
many other companies preferred), potential customer interest was quickly piqued (the bloody-sounding video titles didn’t hurt either). Many of Camp’s initial titles were produced and distributed on the cheap, leaving their alluring cover art as the main draw to their titles. It was this minimal-investment business strategy that helped create the low-budget legend of Camp Video and their titles (which – let’s be honest – weren’t that good). Of the various titles this company distributed, one of the most interesting

(although widely unknown) was Herschell Gordon Lewis’ *The Psychic*. The movie is definitely not of the same caliber of say, *Blood Feast*, but it is charming in its own way. Camp also distributed two Ray Dennis Steckler films: *The Incredibly Strange Creatures Who Stopped Living and Became Mixed Up Zombies* (say that 10 times fast) and *The Thrill Killers*. Even though these titles actually featured some sort of “budget,” they still fit the Camp standards. Their vividly gruesome video box art helped draw consumer attention – especially *The Thrill Killers*.

During the later years of Camp Video, the studio attempted to kick it up a notch in hopes of increasing their sustainability in the market. Their company name was altered – to Camp Motion Pictures. During this timeframe, all of Camp’s titles featured the new Camp Motion Pictures logo, with the numbers on their spines restarting (although the video backs still stated “distrib-



**She Devils on Wheels** (1992): In 1992 Aircel (Eternity Comics) produced a three-issue mini series based on the 1968 Herschell Gordon Lewis motorcycle-gang feature film *She Devils on Wheels*.



uted through Camp Video"). Camp Motion Pictures presented a whole new realm of cheese and sleaze. Their most famous endeavor was *Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers* – Camp's first step towards theatrical production and distribution. For *Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers*, Camp even presented a red carpet premiere with the film's stars – Gunner Hansen and Linnea Quigley. (This was a similar business model to that of Full Moon in the early '90s – maintaining the start of production to end result: home video.) Controlling all aspects of a film's life seems like it would be the ultimate setup, and Camp lived the dream for a minute....

Unfortunately, Camp overextended themselves and ended up disappearing from video store catalogs in the late 1980s. One of their last entries was in July of 1989 for two of their final titles: *Gore-Met Zombie Chef from Hell* and *Nightmare House*.

Camp ultimately purged overstocked titles during their final years, which meant a decent number of fairly unused Camp VHS titles went into circulation and could possibly still be found to this day.

To some fans' excitement a new entity titled "Camp" emerged in 2007; however, there was no direct affiliation with the original company. The new Camp revived some of our favorites from the old Camp in double packs (such as *Video Violence*), and released a slew of Donna Michelle films on DVD before its run came to an end shortly after.

#### Promotions

Camp was low budget all the way – even with PR. Of all the home video companies, Camp may have been the actual worst in terms of promoting their products. Many first releases didn't receive an introductory push to the market nor a mere promo poster. In the case of *Video Violence* (parts 1 and 2), posters were made and somewhat distributed, although they are almost

impossible to find now, but they are out there. Aside from these posters, ads were taken out in a variety of magazines – more so for the promotion of *Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers*. "Hookers" was released with posters, as well as a press kit and even a few promo items – one of which was a foam soda can cooler (that went around the can). It was their strongest advertising campaign, but it didn't really help (a reshoot might have though). Of all Camp's titles, posters and promos, those for *Hookers* are the easiest to find. However, if you discover the mini-posters for *Video Violence* or *Video Violence Part 2* – or even (the rarely seen but does exist) *Gore-Met Zombie Chef from Hell* – HOLD ON TO THEM! They are relics of this bygone era and are almost nonexistent.

#### Collectability

Camp products can be found on the collector market pretty consistently.

Although their titles don't fetch the prices of companies like Unicorn Video, Camp has its own following which still helps to drive their prices past most titles I purchased during my video expeditions. Camp has two highly sought after titles on their label – tapes which are commonly seen in the \$50 to \$75 range (in excellent condition) – the big box versions of *Gore-Met Zombie Chef from Hell* and *The Psychic*. These tapes have, time and time again, sold for impressive amounts whenever they go up for sale. Other titles within the Camp catalog vary anywhere from \$10 to \$25, depending on their condition. And as with any company, collectors are interested in the format and box type of their releases. Camp was a VHS company that released big boxes AND slipcases for their titles. Although the artwork was generally the same, each of the Camp Video titles (not the Camp Motion Pictures titles) had releases in both formats – the Camp Motion Pictures titles were in slipcases only. The slipcases for Camp Video are a bit more challenging to find than their big boxes, as the slipcase format was

introduced towards the end of Camp's run, but that hasn't necessarily effected their price on the secondary collector market. In some instances you can find Camp slipcases still sealed for under \$10 on eBay.

Camp is a fun, colorful company to collect as a VHS fan. These extreme gore-soaked artworks and their zany titles have helped many fans flashback to their youth when we were first exposed to the over-the-top cheese that was low, low budget movies. Keep on hunting Video Fiends!



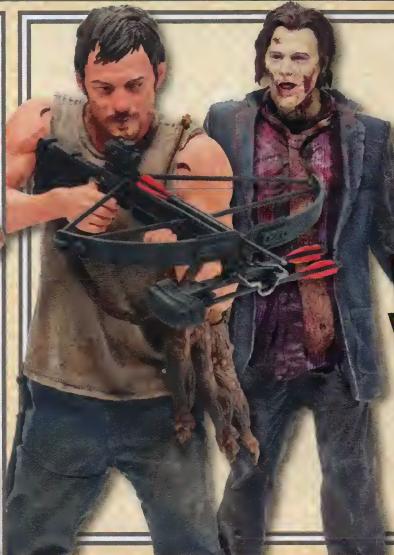
## CAMP VIDEO HORROR BODY COUNT:

- |   |   |                                 |                                |
|---|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Death Row Diner                          | 5. Gore-Met Zombie Chef from Hell (Small Box) | 8. Las Vegas Serial Killer, The | 13. Video Violence (Big Box)   |
| 2. Demon Hunter                             | 6. Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers                 | 9. Nightmare House              | 14. Video Violence (Small Box) |
| 3. Evil Spawn                               | 7. Incredibly Strange Creatures ...           | 10. Psychic, The                | 15. Video Violence Part 2      |
| 4. Gore-Met Zombie Chef from Hell (Big Box) |   | 11. Slime City                  |                                |
|   |   | 12. Thrill Killers, The         |                                |

*Two on a Guillotine* (1965): Possibly the oddest Dell Comic movie-adapted comic book came in the form of this one-shot based on the 1965 film *Two on a Guillotine*, directed by William Conrad.

# TOY NEWS

HELLO BOILS AND GHOULS! THIS ISSUE'S TOY NEWS IS QUITE THE CATCH! MCFARLANE UNLEASHES SOME FIENDISHLY FUN WALKING DEAD TOYS, WHILE DIAMOND MAKE FANS SCREAM WITH THEIR NEW LINE OF ACTION FIGURES BASED ON THE MUNSTERS!



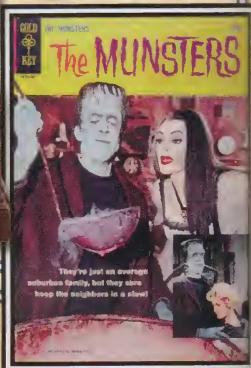
MCFARLANE TOYS HASN'T BEEN A MAJOR PLAYER IN THE WORLD OF HORROR TOYS FOR A FEW YEARS NOW - BUT ALL THAT CHANGES THIS FALL WHEN THEY RELEASE THEIR FIRST WAVE OF ACTION FIGURES BASED ON AMC'S THE WALKING DEAD. THE FIRST ASSORTMENT OF FIGURES WILL INCLUDE RICK GRIMES, DARYL DIXON AND TWO ZOMBIES - A "WALKER" AND A "BITER." THE INTERESTING ASPECT OF THESE TOYS ARE THEIR PLAY FEATURES, WHICH INCLUDE "CHATTERING TEETH" FOR THE BITER ZOMBIE - AND A WIND-UP WALKING FEATURE FOR THE APTLY NAMED WALKER ZOMBIE. EXPECT MORE TOYS BASED ON THIS TV SHOW TO FOLLOW, AS WELL AS A SERIES OF COMIC-BASED WALKING DEAD FIGURES.

NECA TOYS WILL RELEASE THREE WALKING DEAD MINI-BUSTS, SCULPTED BY KNB, OVER THE NEXT YEAR, INCLUDING ONE EXCLUSIVE AT THE SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON.



THE MUNSTERS ARE MAKING A COMEBACK THANKS TO DIAMOND SELECT AND SCULPTOR JEAN ST. JEAN. LOOK FOR FULLY ARTICULATED VERSIONS OF HERMAN, GRAMPA, LILY AND EDDIE, ACCOMPANIED BY AN IMPRESSIVE VOLUME OF ACCESSORIES, THIS OCTOBER!

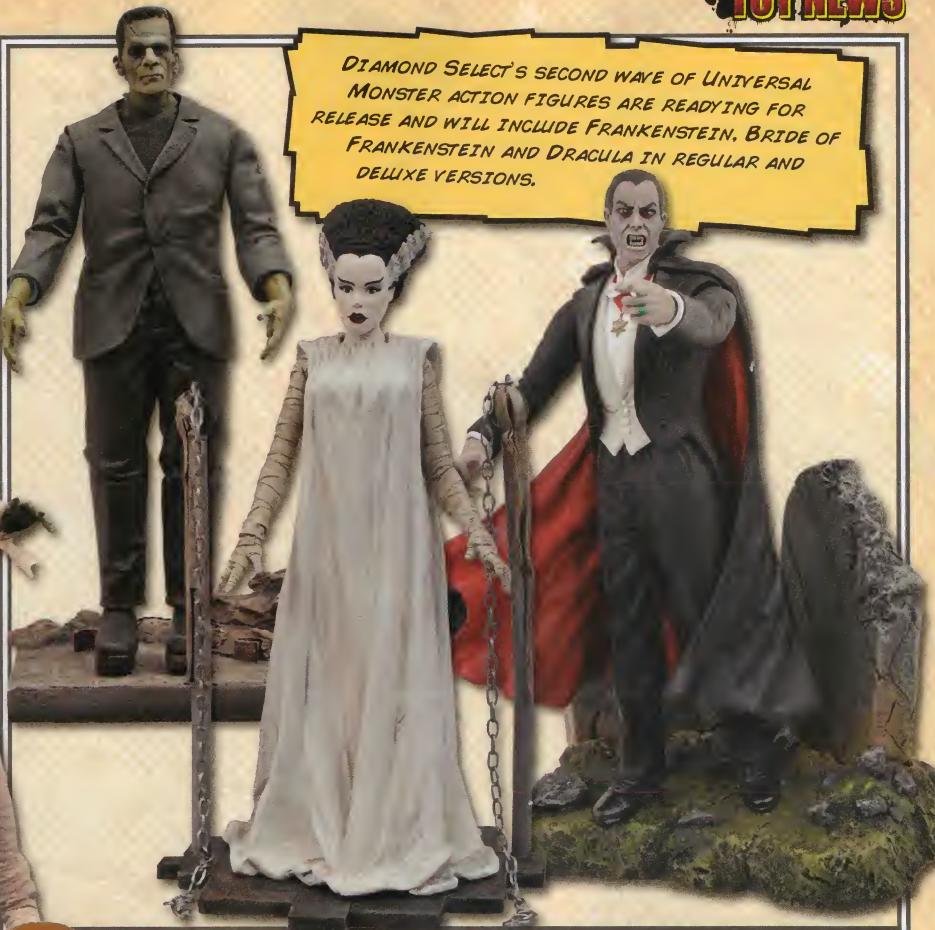
TITAN BOOKS WILL FOLLOW UP THEIR LINE OF HAMMER HORROR MINI-BUSTS (ALREADY ANNOUNCED: DRACULA (CHRISTOPHER LEE) AND COUNTESS DRACULA (INGRID PIT)) WITH THIS VAN HELSING (PETER CUSHING) MINI-BUST, SET FOR RELEASE THIS OCTOBER!



**The Munsters** (1965): Gold Key Comics released a total of 16 issues based on this hit television show. The Munsters didn't hit comic stores again until 1997, thanks to publisher TV Comics.

THE SECOND WAVE IN DIAMOND COMICS' MEGO-INSPIRED EMCE FIGURES WILL HIT STORES SOON AFTER THIS ISSUE STREETS AND INCLUDES 8" VERSIONS OF DRACULA AND THE MUMMY. MORE UNIVERSAL-INSPIRED PRODUCTS ARE PLANNED, INCLUDING FULLY ARTICULATED FIGURES (RIGHT) AND A MONSTEROUS 18" FRANKENSTEIN TOY (WITH AN SRP OF \$80). EXPECT MORE MONSTERS TO SEE LIGHT OF DAY, INCLUDING THE METALLINA MUTANT FROM THIS ISLAND EARTH!

DIAMOND SELECT'S SECOND WAVE OF UNIVERSAL MONSTER ACTION FIGURES ARE READYING FOR RELEASE AND WILL INCLUDE FRANKENSTEIN, BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN AND DRACULA IN REGULAR AND DELUXE VERSIONS.



WHO DOESN'T ENJOY FUNKO'S CONSISTENT LINE OF KID-FRIENDLY HORROR TOYS? WE KNOW WE DO! RECENT ANNOUNCEMENTS INCLUDE NEW WACKY WOBBLER MONSTERS FEATURING THE CREATURE, FRANKENSTEIN, DRACULA AND WEREWOLF - AS WELL AS A MICHAEL MYERS (HALLOWEEN) AND BEETLEJUICE (DESIGN DRAWING SHOWN BELOW). LOOK FOR ALL OF THESE KILLER BOBBLEERS TO STREET IN TIME FOR HALLOWEEN! IF THAT WASN'T ENOUGH - FRIGHT-FEAST FANS WILL ENJOY A NEW WAVE OF HORROR CEREAL TOYS BASED ON THE GENERAL MILLS CLASSIC MONSTERS - COUNT CHOCULA, FRANKENBERRY AND BOO BERRY! POP! AD ICONS VINYL FIGURES OF EACH CHARACTER WILL BE JOINED BY PLUSH VERSIONS. NO WORD ON WHETHER THE ELUSIVE FRUIT BRUTE OR YUMMY MUMMY WILL JOIN THIS LINEUP IN THE FUTURE.



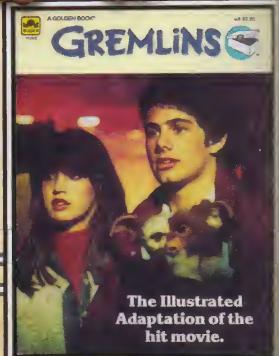
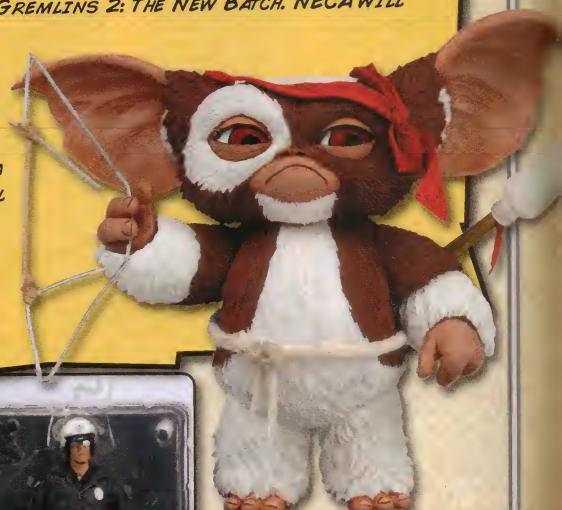
**Beetlejuice** (1991): Harvey Comics Company released a number of *Beetlejuice* comics between 1991 and 1992 – all based on the popular TV animated series which aired on both ABC and Fox.



Bif Bang Pow! Revealed a number of San Diego Comic-Con exclusives for this upcoming 2011 event. Dexter (The Dark Defender) will see release in the first-ever 3 3/4" scale Dex figure, while Twilight Zone exclusives in the form of a Bob Wilson/Don Carter figure (with alternate clothing and accessories) will be available as well as a "Bobble-Head" display piece for Twilight Zone fans featuring iconic opening credit visuals.



This issue was supposed to feature a follow-up interview with production manager of NECA, Randy Falk; however, due to limited space we opted instead to give readers a better look at the upcoming Gremlins action figure line from NECA! Shown here are the first and second series of Mogwai action figures based on the characters from Gremlins 2: The New Batch. NECA will release Gizmo in two formats – regular and "Combat" – as well as all the villain Mogwai, including Mohawk, Lenny, George and Daffy. A San Diego Comic-Con exclusive version of Gizmo will be available at the annual mega-event – portraying Gizmo with sunglasses and a Comic-Con bag and badge. Hopefully next issue we will be able to present a full look at the Green and Slimy Gremlin-sized characters which will include the long-anticipated Spider-Gremlin. Shown below is the latest Terminator action figure release from NECA which includes their first foray into the original 1984 film.



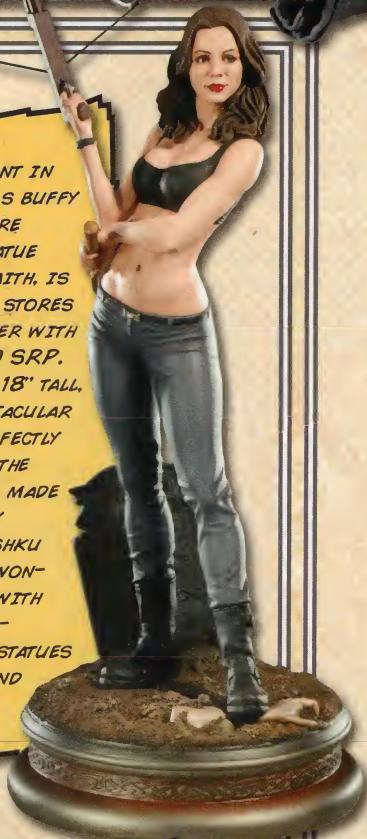
**Gremlins (1984):** Golden Book published a number of Gremlins paper goods in conjunction with the film's release, including this "illustrated adaptation" – or comic book, in layman's terms.



HOT TOYS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SOME OF THE MOST IMPRESSIVELY SCULPTED ACTION FIGURES BEING RELEASED TODAY, AND THIS MILLA JOVOVICH "ALICE" 12" FIGURE FROM RESIDENT EVIL: AFTERLIFE IS NO EXCEPTION. ALTHOUGH, WITH A RETAIL PRICE OF \$164.99, YOU WOULD EXPECT PERFECTION. THIS FIGURE COMES PACKED WITH TWO ALTERNATE OUTFITS AND ENOUGH WEAPON ACCESSORIES TO CHOKE A ZOMBIE! LOOK FOR HER IN STORES AT THE END OF THIS YEAR!



THE THIRD INSTALLMENT IN SIDESHOW'S BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER STATUE SERIES, FAITH, IS SET TO HIT STORES THIS WINTER WITH A \$249.99 SRP. STANDING 18" TALL, THIS SPECTACULAR PIECE PERFECTLY CAPTURES THE CHARACTER MADE FAMOUS BY ELIZA DUSHKU AND FITS WONDERFULLY WITH THE PRIOR-RELEASED STATUES - BUFFY AND WILLOW.



CULT COLLECTIBLES' LATEST BOBBLE-HEAD BASED ON FULCI'S THE BEYOND IS NOW AVAILABLE AT ONLINE RETAILERS!



SHOWN HERE ARE QUARANTINE STUDIOS' TWO LATEST RESIN BUSTS FROM THEIR ZOMBIES UNLEASHED LINE - MR. HYDE AND THE VITTELS BROTHERS. SCULPTED BY WILLIAM PAQUET, EACH FIGURE IS 6" TALL AND WILL RETAIL FOR \$60.



*The Twilight Zone* (1991): Now Comics launched a monthly *Twilight Zone* comic book series in '91 which only lasted 11 issues, with the final issue being recalled from store shelves.

# MORBID ENTERPRISES

HALLOWEEN COMPANY MORBID ENTERPRISES UNVEILED A NUMBER OF KILLER LICENSED MASKS AND PROPS FOR THE HAUNTING SEASON FROM SUCH FILMS AS EXORCIST AND HOUSE OF 1000 CORPSES (INCLUDING A LIFE-SIZE ANIMATRONIC CAPTAIN SPAULDING), NOT TO MENTION A LICENSED ROB ZOMBIE MASK!



Horror fans have what many would consider nightmares when we daydream. What would it be like to go through a zombie apocalypse? What would happen to us if we got bit by a werewolf? And what would we do if a vampire moved in next door? In 1985, we received answers to many of these questions. This was an amazing year for horror classics as zombies shambled across the screen in *Return of the Living Dead*, *Re-Animator*, and *Day of the Dead*, a werewolf menaced a young boy in *Silver Bullet*, and a TV horror host had to battle the very real monster he'd only faced before on a movie screen in *Fright Night*.

Out of all of the films released that year, *Fright Night* was the one that really hit close to home for horror fans, quite literally. Bringing the horror of a vampire into suburbia was the brainchild of Tom Holland, who'd already written other horror films, such as *The Beast Within* and *Psycho II*. Having also acted in numerous TV and film projects over the years, Holland stepped into the director's chair for the first time with *Fright Night*.

The story starts with a scream in the dark. Charley Brewster (William Ragsdale) is a typical American teenager, trying to score with his girlfriend Amy (Amanda Bearse) while under the guise of "studying." Amy's a sweet, innocent girl who has not yet given in to Charley and his advances, but as it happens this night, she's finally ready to "let the right one in." Unfortunate timing, as just then Charley notices that someone has moved in next door and thinks he sees a coffin being carried into the house by his new neighbors ... and he's right.

Over the next few days (or nights), people start disappearing, their corpses later showing up around town. Charley comes to suspect his mysterious neighbor who has quite the way with the ladies, ladies who are never seen again. Jerry Dandridge (Chris Sarandon) seems to have it all: looks, money, charm, and a live-in carpenter named Billy Cole (Jonathan Stark). Soon Charley's suspicions get the better of him and he starts spying on Jerry — realizing he had a reason to be suspicious. ...

# FRIGHT NIGHT

A HORRORHOUND RETROSPECTIVE  
Remembering the Night of Your Life • By Jessica Dwyer  
with Nathan Hanneman



Charley is a horror-movie buff, as is his friend "Evil" Ed Thompson (Stephen Geoffreys), but even Ed doesn't believe Charley when he tries to convince him that his neighbor is a bloodsucker — in fact, nobody believes him (including his mom, Amy and the police).

Charley eventually seeks out horror-movie star Peter Vincent (Roddy McDowall) who has just been fired from his TV horror-hosting job. Peter doesn't believe Charley either, leaving the teenager with no choice but to try and kill Jerry himself.

Not wanting things to get out of hand, Amy and Ed bribe Peter to perform "a test" on a complicit Jerry (with fake holy water) that will prove he's human. But when Jerry shows no reflection in a prop mirror, Peter realizes that Charley has been right all along. With the proverbial cat out of the bag, Jerry descends on Charley's friends one by one, turning them into vampires and pushing Charley to confront the bloodsucker.

Even Peter Vincent finally agrees to help Charley, and after messily dispatching Billy Cole, the duo face the vampire (and save Amy, who's been bitten and changed GREATLY). With the power of sunlight and faith (which you have to have), our heroes triumph. Jerry is destroyed, and Charley and Amy go back to their normal lives, while Peter Vincent returns to his horror-hosting job.

Director, Tom Holland, explained of the film's origins: "I was working on the script for *Cloak and Dagger Jack Flack* and it came out of the blue. The original version [of *Fright Night*] was inspired by the book *The Window* by Cornell Woolrich which was the juvenile version of *Rear Window*.

In fact, it may have predated *Rear Window*, I'm not sure. [Editor's note: *The Window* did predate *Rear Window*; however, the Hitchcock feature was actually based on Cornell Woolrich's 1942 short story "It Had to Be Murder."] I just thought it would be hilarious if a vampire moved in next door to a teenage horror-movie fan, because I was thinking about ways of making *The Window*, to bring it into the now." Holland continued: "The idea rattled around in my head for about a year. Then I thought about growing up with

the *Friday Night Frights* and what I would have done. You know, they always had a host. I'm of an age where I grew up with them — I'm not sure the



**Chucky** (2007): Brian Pulido wrote this four-issue mini-series reintroducing Chucky (*Child's Play*) to the world of comics. Published by Devil's Due Publishing, each issue featured variant covers.

younger kids know this anymore – but if I was Charley Brewster, I'd go to the host of a horror-movie show."

Personally, this writer had one nagging question for Mr. Holland in regard to the film. Just what was Billy Cole? "Billy Cole was Renfield, but I had to justify how he could move around in the daylight, and I don't know if I did it or not." Holland tries to explain, "He's half-bitten, you know what I mean? He hadn't been taken over yet and hadn't become a full vampire." ... While that may not have been overly obvious (or even easy to explain), one thing was for sure – this movie hit the mark for horror and cinema fans alike.

Released on August 2nd, 1985, *Fright Night* became a word-of-mouth sleeper hit and one of the biggest horror releases of that year, earning an estimated \$6 million upon its opening weekend before pulling a final domestic gross of around \$25 million – better than any other horror film released that year (outside of *A Nightmare on Elm Street Part 2*). A financial success during its theatrical release, as well as on home video and cable TV, it soon became one of those classic "channel surfing" flicks that you'd land on and watch until the end. William Ragsdale and Amanda Bearse each went on to star in Fox hit comedies

(Ragsdale in *Herman's Head* and Bearse in *Married with Children*). The film was not only a financial hit – it was a favorite among fans and critics alike, even winning three Saturn Awards for Best Horror Film, Supporting Actor (Roddy McDowall) and Best Writing. Not bad for an R-rated horror film. Holland reacts, "that was an R-rating back then, but now it's like watching a PG [rated film]. It's hard to imagine [it getting a] PG-13 isn't it? But I think some of it was daring for the time."

Possibly the greatest and longest-lasting accomplishments of this film, however, is that it still holds up as scary and masterful as it did 25 years ago. "I look at *Fright Night* and it doesn't seem old fashioned to me. Well, the disco dates

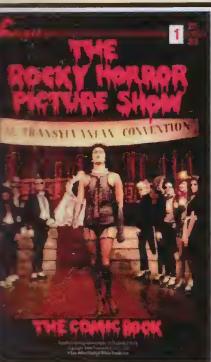


it," Holland joked. But it's like those timeless movies from the '50s, like *Invaders from Mars*, where the kid has to fight something he never thought he'd have to fight – those movie are always eternal.

One of the more obvious reasons for *Fright Night*'s impact on cinema fans came from the straight-forward story which mixed wonderfully with nasty werewolf creations and giant monstrous bats that zoomed across the screen. As vampires, Amy and Jerry were frightening creatures, not dainty, neck-nibbling, undead blood-suckers, but creatures who'd rip out your jugular or just tear your head off. To this day, Amy's final transformation remains jaw-dropping (pun intended).

In an interesting note, when discussing the film with star Amanda Bearse, she revealed to *HorrorHound* that she appeared in every scene of her character's transformation, including the monstrous "smiling" vamp, which she went on to explain received very little screen-time due to the appliances' humorous look when taken in at an extended period of time.

Steve Johnson and his team created a new breed of vampire via cutting-edge special effects. "Well, we could do it!" Tom Holland exclaims. "I mean, what was happening was, I wrote *The Beast Within* and the effects couldn't really do it, and it's not a criticism at all because the guys did a great job. But there's the exploding balloon boy towards the end – the boy could not make a transition from a boy into a monster that was believable. It just wasn't there, bladders weren't there. Before that I had wrote one called *The Initiation of Sarah* where they couldn't do it, but then finally they could do *Psycho II*, and we really pushed the envelope with *Fright Night*. What had happened was I had inherited Richard Edlund's effects team coming off of *Ghostbusters*, and they were fully financed by the studio.



*The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1991): Caliber Comics (*The Crow*, *Deadworld*) released this three-issue mini-series based on the horror-rock musical, *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, in 1990.



So for the first time, I got what was then cutting-edge, state-of-the-art effects. All of a sudden, what I was writing on the page, they could really start to do it. So I can feel the history of it and the growth of effects through my film."

"The credit goes to Steve Johnson and Randall Cook," Tom Holland continues of the FX maestros' work. "Both these guys really did it."

Both those guys really did it. Now, they did it under the direction of Richard Edlund, but I

appeal is that anybody who loves horror movies has gone through that



tell you ... those guys did it. What Richard did was all the plates, and really making all that work. Randall worked on *The Gate* [another cinematic FX achievement], went on to do CG for *Lord of the Rings*, and did second unit for *King Kong* – Steve did *Langoliers* for me too."

In fact, sculptures and work which were presented in *Fright Night* are now seemingly going away; guys like Steve Johnson are becoming extinct in the film industry (in fact, Steve recently retired from the industry for this reason). Holland continued, during a recent interview with *HorrorHound* about how organic FX work in films, such as *Fright Night*, is becoming obsolete, "It was Jack Morrison that made me realize that the monsters were dying out for CGI." Holland explains, "That the sculpting and the modeling was going away because of CGI. And therefore props from the original movies had become increasingly valuable. I didn't understand that, believe it or not. I mean, it's very, very strange.

[*Fright Night*] was a love letter to fans everywhere and of all ages, which seems to keep surviving because of that. Certainly a large part of *Fright Night*'s



ing our talk with Tom Holland, we delved into the characters which make up this amazing film which impacted horror fans over 25 years ago and how their alterations in the upcoming remake will effect his work.

With the upcoming remake, the filmmakers have given hints to who the character of Jerry Dandridge is. For the original film, we saw paintings and antiques in his home which showed his age, however, very little else was given to viewers. "He'd had an affair, a love affair, god knows how many centuries before with one of the progenitors of Amy, like Amy's great-great-great-grandmother or something." Holland reveals, "[That idea] came out of rehearsals, out of working with Chris."

In fact, Chris Sarandon also gave Jerry Dandridge his sympathetic quality – something being ignored with this new film. The filmmakers of the remake describe him as a shark, but in the original he gave Charley a choice. "The backstory was hinted at in the script. Chris wanted it more specific, and in rehearsal we worked them in. And then my memory is I had the

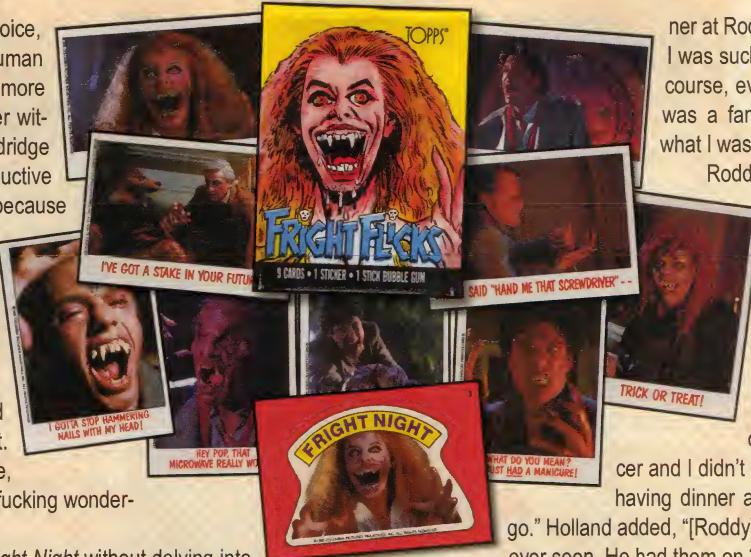


Jerry, in fact, gives Charley a choice, and it gives him depth. He's almost human in those parts. "Well, it made him more seductive," Holland says. No character witnessed the sympathy of Jerry Dandridge more than Evil Ed. In a very seductive scene, Jerry plays to Ed's loneliness because he understands it, relates to it. "[Jerry is] lonely himself, exactly." Holland admits, "And he's polysexual, he doesn't care who he bites. So what we're saying is, with *Fright Night*, even though it was a B-horror movie, we got some character in there and that's a wonderful thing. It's the heart. And let's give credit where credit is due, a lot of that is Roddy McDowall who's fucking wonderful."

And how can you even discuss *Fright Night* without delving into the amazing Roddy McDowall, who brought vampire hunter Peter Vincent to life! This London-born thespian became an international star if only for his participation in the uber-popular *Planet of the Apes* film series, playing iconic characters Cornelius and Caesar. From there, he went on to star in everything from *The Poseidon Adventure* and *The Legend of Hell House* to *Class of 1984* and *Overboard*. He even voiced V.I.N.CENT. in Disney's

1979 cult classic, *The Black Hole*. Roddy brought class to anything he participated in. He never played his roles as if it was participating in a B movie. He brought his "A" game.

"And he probably did that even when he was ill," Holland recollects of this amazing actor. "[He was a] very nice man actually. He had acted for me in a contemporary part in another movie I'd written, *Class of 1984*. Who I'd originally wanted was Vincent Price – Peter Vincent is a combination of Vincent Price and Peter Cushing – but Vincent was too frail. Ironically, a couple of years later I met him and his wife at a din-



ner at Roddy McDowall's; he was frail then too. I was such a fan of him and Peter Cushing. Of course, everything changed with *Psycho*, but I was a fan of those [horror icons], and that's what I was thinking of when I wrote *Fright Night*. Roddy did it 'to a T' because he knew all of those people."

Holland continues,

"Roddy had the potential to be the younger version of [Vincent Price] because of *Planet of the Apes*, if that makes any sense. He'd just done that wonderful acting job for my script of *Class of 1984*. He knocked it out of the ball park. He had brain cancer and I didn't realize it. After the movie, we kept on having dinner and stuff, and we started to see him go." Holland added, "[Roddy] had the biggest collection of films I'd ever seen. He had them on 35 and 16mm. He was a living history of Hollywood. He would go out and visit the silent motion-picture stars at the motion-picture home. He just had stories, because he had gone to children's school at 20th Century Fox and

MGM, back in the '40s. He knew where the bodies were buried. He knew all the stories. I remember when we were filming *Fright Night* and I was living on coffee and cigarettes, he walked by me at 8 in the morning on my first pack and says, 'That's what Rod Serling did every morning.'"

The soundtrack for *Fright Night* was also just as iconic as the images, with the title song recorded by The J. Geils Band. Brad Fiedel, who had penned the haunting music for *The Terminator*, scored the film with a creepy synthesizer beat that suited the mood





perfectly – a melding of classic and new wave. Tom Holland reminisced of the film's soundtrack and how it came to fruition: "A man named David Chackler, he's now my business partner in my company, he did *Child's Play* for me too – he put out that 45 rpm of the rap song Chucky did, if you can find that. I gotta give it to David, he is a walking history of the music business. We had fun. The real tragedy is Brad Fiedel can't find the master tracks for the underscore in the movie; we wanted to put those out too, but he can't find them. We went through them and he made the initial selections. It's brilliant, just a good day, and I don't know why. That

business is interlocking relationships. I mean Evelyn Champagne King is still calling him. There's a story behind every one of those songs. David started out with doo wop in Philadelphia and he's done like 40 soundtrack albums or something."

Looking back at *Fright Night*, we asked Tom what stood out as his favorite part of the film. "Oh gee," Holland replied, "I mean, the script was so strong that I had to keep writing just to find out what happened next. With *Fright Night*, I was on the floor. I mean, I chortled a lot. It was a

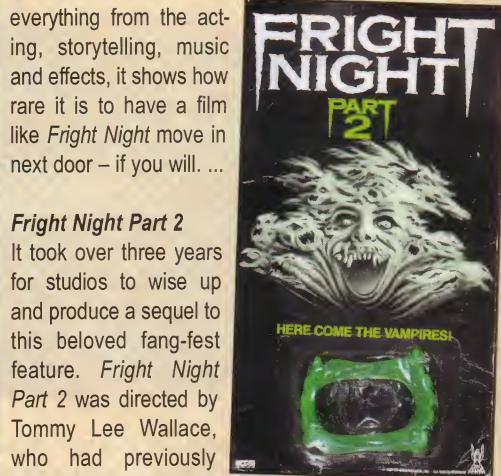
funny situation to begin with, but it was a hysterically funny script to read – but nobody knew. I swear to god, Columbia didn't have a clue there was a comedy line in it." In fact, considering how dark the original trailer played out, one would have to wonder if they ever knew the film had an underlined-comedy tone. "It's always about being scary for the studios," Tom added, "There was a lot [of comedy] in *Langoliers*, but ABC forced me to cut it out. The same thing happened with *Thinner*, which was a very funny movie, but they tightened it so much not a lot of the humor is left. *Fright Night* [as is *Child's Play*] is humorous at its core because the idea of a horror-movie fan insisting that there is

a vampire living next door in a middle-class, suburban community is very funny. It's funny because nobody is going to believe him and it's so ridiculous on its face. And then when I started putting in the hokey movies at the very beginning on Charley's TV. . ."

So, if the humor was intentional – then Roddy meant to be holding the stake backwards? "Yes. That is deliberate." Tom explained, "Even the blood splattering in his face was played for laughs. That is a lot of the difference

between a lot of films and *Fright Night*. *Fright Night* never winked at the audience and it never broke the fourth wall. Neither of those mistakes happened in either *Child's Play* or *Fright Night*. But *Fright Night* is inherently humorous because of the concept. Winking at the audience is the last refuge of those who haven't pulled off a successful horror movie. When they can't scare you, they start winking at you. The minute it becomes self-referential and breaking the fourth wall, it doesn't allow the audience to take part in the journey with the characters in the movie. It puts them outside the movie, watching it, and denies them the emotional experience." Luckily, we had a passionate director handling these aspects of the filmmaking process. After discussing the film, and all the attention

to detail that went into everything from the acting, storytelling, music and effects, it shows how rare it is to have a film like *Fright Night* move in next door – if you will. . .



*Fright Night Part 2*  
It took over three years for studios to wise up and produce a sequel to this beloved fang-fest feature. *Fright Night Part 2* was directed by Tommy Lee Wallace, who had previously directed *Halloween III: Season of the Witch*. Wallace also co-wrote the sequel with Miguel Tejada-Flores and Tim Metcalfe. The sequel re-teamed Roddy McDowall and William Ragsdale – with Charley now attending college. Amanda Bearse did not return as Amy, and instead actress Traci Lind (*My Boyfriend's Back*) was cast as Charley's new love interest, Alex.

The story begins with Charley, dealing with the trauma inflicted during the first film's vampiric alteration – thanks to the help of his psychologist.

Eventually coming to the rational conclusion that Jerry was actually a serial killer, and not a creature of the night, Charley begins to put his life back together. Peter Vincent hasn't dealt with things very well either, and when Charley goes to visit him, he witnesses something eerily familiar – as new neighbors are moving into Peter's apartment complex with what appear to be coffins. As it turns out, Jerry Dandridge's equally blood-thirsty sister, Regine (Julie Carmen), is in town and out for revenge against the one-time vampire slayers.

Once Charley meets the sexy Regine, he's instantly smitten, which understandably causes problems with his girlfriend. Unlike her brother's single minion, Regine has an entourage that soon reveal themselves to be just as inhuman: Belle (Russell Clark)



*Boris Karloff Tales of Mystery* (1963): Soon after its launch, Gold Key's *Boris Karloff Thriller* comic book changed its name to *Tales of Mystery*. It continued publication through 1980, ceasing its run at issue #97.

is also a vampire, while Louie is a werewolf-like creature (played by Jon Gries of *The Monster Squad* fame, where he also played a lycanthrope) and Bozworth (Brian Thompson, who would play numerous monsters over the years, notably in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) has an affinity for eating bugs.

Louie takes a shine to Alex and begins stalking her, while Charley's friend Richie (the late Merritt Butrick) hooks up with Regine. When Charley sees Richie drained by the two vampires at Regine's party, he understandably freaks out and rushes to Peter for help once again.

Though Regine convinces both of them that her supposed vampirism is just an act, created with contacts and fake fangs, Peter pulls out his trusty pocket mirror and proves the act is a lie. The vampiress gleefully reveals that she's going to make them pay for the destruction of her brother.

Charley is eventually bitten by Regine and is slowly changing into a vampire. To further create chaos in Peter Vincent's life, he finds out that he is being replaced as the host of the on-screen "Fright Night" TV show – by none other than Regine. ... Peter decides to stake her (on camera), but is stopped by security and taken to a psychiatric hospital. Charley and Peter ultimately defeat Regine's cronies (in varied and gory ways) and destroy her using sunlight, once again their weapon of choice.

*Fright Night Part 2* was not as successful as the first, due to the combination of a very limited theatrical release and fan perception of the sequel as less than on par to the first film. It made just shy of \$3 million at the US box office. ... But, much like the first movie, *Fright Night Part 2* found a new life on VHS, as well as finding an audience on cable television, and grew into its own cult fandom. In fact, while both *Fright Night* films were released onto DVD,

with the original still readily available

(even being packaged as a double feature with 1998's *Urban Legend*), *Fright Night Part 2*'s DVD has become something of a hot commodity – now out of print and selling for \$40 to \$100 (or more) on the secondary market.

Not bad for a film that completely bombed upon its original theatrical release.

### Merchandising the Undead

Over the years, both *Fright Night* films featured a decent amount of merchandising. The original *Fright Night* had a novelization released during its theatrical run, written by horror duo Skipp and Spector, with a slightly vamped-out Jerry Dandridge on the cover. In 1988, NOW Comics began a successful monthly series of *Fright Night* comic



books, featuring original stories that followed Peter, Charley, and even saw the return of Evil Ed in all his vampiric glory. The series ran for two years and 22 issues, and even spawned a number of 3-D specials. NOW also released a comic tie-in of *Fright Night Part 2* in 1988.

That same year, Amiga released a *Fright Night* video game, which has become a rare item. In a twist, players took on the role of Jerry Dandridge – not the heroes. The goal was to feed on blood and stay alive while avoiding garlic and crosses, etc. The game had great graphics for the time as well as some creepy music. It also had a very well-rendered start screen inspired by the movie's iconic poster.

In 1989 Topps Trading Card company released a series of collector cards called Fright Flicks, which featured various cards based on a number of then-popular horror movies, including *Poltergeist*, *Predator*, *Pumpkinhead*, *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Aliens*. Of course, *Fright Night* was included in this trading-card series, but the coolest aspect of its involvement was the fact that the character of Amy appeared on one of the four variant wax-pack wrappers, as well as on a sticker and a collect-a-piece puzzle.

Outside of these items, a number of fan-made model kits and Halloween masks have been produced of Jerry Dandridge and Amy, while the majority of the remaining collectibles revolve around the film's promotional works – including movie posters, lobby cards, press books, soundtracks, souvenir books and home video releases (including a killer VHS release for *Fright Night Part 2* which was packaged in a coffin-shaped box). A rare promo item or two may also exist (as evident by the included photo of a carded set of play vampire teeth which were given to video store owners in promotion of *Fright Night*

Part 2).

The only thing fans of the film are clamoring for that we have never been given is a respectable DVD presentation of the original film. With so many special edition Blu-rays being released, it is almost offensive that this horror gem still sits on

Best Buy shelves without even a simple commentary track included.

At the end of the day though – the *Fright Night* films have a special place in the hearts of many a HorrorHound, whether the upcoming remake starring Anton Yelchin, Colin Farrell, and David Tennant proves to be a honorable homage or not. Roddy McDowall once said, "Apparently your generation doesn't want to see vampire killers anymore, nor vampires either. All they want to see is slashers running around in ski masks, hacking up young virgins." That statement could not be further from the truth, and be it the original 1985 feature or the upcoming Craig Gillespie redo – fans are definitely in the mood to witness some blood-soaked fang action, and a slightly sure hero utter the phrase, "I am Peter Vincent, Vampire Killer!"

**Jennifer's Body** (2009): Boom! Studios released a graphic novel for *Jennifer's Body* in conjunction with the '09 theatrical release of the Megan Fox feature, with art by Tim Seely, Jim Mahfood and Nikki Cook.

## Mike Ploog : Terror on the Pen's Tip

I grew up loving comics and owe my gratitude to the genre for providing such imagination-provoking entertainment in my youth. And I still consider the works of certain comic artists to be examples of artistic perfection. Artists such as Jim Lee, John Romita Sr., and Bernie Wrightson could give life to characters in a way few others can. Their fearless expression and intense imagery evolved the genre into all-new territory – introducing

horror characters into superhero comics. But for this HorrorHound, there is one premier artist – Mike Ploog. Most remembered for creating one of the biggest characters in the Marvel Universe – Ghost Rider – Ploog was also responsible for delivering various covers and panels featuring were-wolves, vampires and monsters. But Mike's legacy touched the horror/sci-fi film community in ways not many know of.

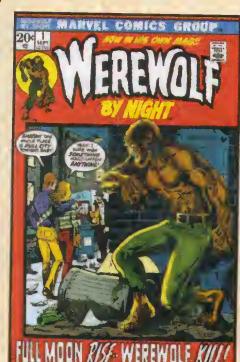
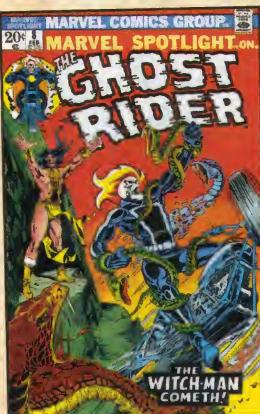
Mike began his career in the military, then after being discharged, he picked up a job doing clean-up work on *Superman* and *Batman* cartoons for Filmation (*He-Man*). A few promotions later, Ploog was working as a full-on animator. But after responding to an ad from Will Eisner who was looking for an assistant for his new military publication (which was a subject Mike was familiar with). His first jaunt into comics was a black and white horror series for Warren Publishing. Later, samples of some Western art Mike had done won him the job taking on the first appearance of *Werewolf by Night* for Marvel comics. Soon after, Mike was asked to help ink a new character called Ghost Rider. This well-received intro into the world of Marvel Comics opened the door for more of our beloved horror characters of the '70s including Man-Thing, Frankenstein's Monster, and (of course) Werewolf by Night and the original Ghost Rider – all the works of Mike Ploog.

A rather unknown facet of Mike's career is his work in cinema. Mike did post-production work for *Ghostbusters* and served as a storyboard artist on *The Dark Crystal*, *Return to Oz*, as well as the original animated adaptation of J.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. One important film in particular Mike worked on, however, was John Carpenter's *The Thing*, for which he served as a

production illustrator. Even though Rob Bottin did the special effects, many of the concepts for the creatures came from the sketch pads of Mike Ploog.

Today, Mike continues as an artist and can be seen doing conventions from time to time, selling prints of some of his early and current endeavors. Check out this legend's Web site and see what he is up to at [www.mikeploog.us](http://www.mikeploog.us).

~ by Matt Moore



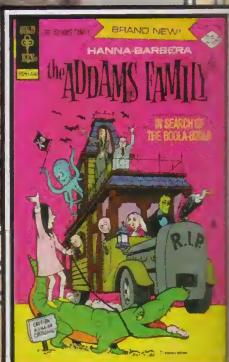
# FANTASTIC COLLECTOR SPOTLIGHT

## Celebrity Edition: Tom Holland

While discussing the original *Fright Night* feature film with director Tom Holland, the topic of his own personal collection came up. Apparently, Holland has such a love for his 1985 vampire flick that he has harbored an assemblage of original movie props from the film, which include the original demon-vampire puppet that

Jerry Dandridge turned into near the end of the film, Jerry's skeleton after he meets his sunlight-drenched demise, and the original "werewolf" puppet which was used during the Evil Ed attack on Peter Vincent and the subsequent transformation. These props are proudly displayed in Holland's home, and both he and HorrorHound thought it would be pretty neat to share some of these photos portraying their current residence and condition. 

\*Thanks to Sean Clark



*The Addams Family* (1974): Gold Key released three issues of *The Addams Family* (based on the Hanna-Barbera cartoon) in 1974, while the "Family" appeared in comics via *The New Yorker* between 1938 and 1988.

# COLLECT THIS!

# PROMOTIONAL PAPER MASKS

Over the years, movie studios have come up with some clever ways to promote their movies. One being the paper/cardboard cut-out mask which has been a staple in film PR for over 50 years, and has been utilized in the promotion of such films as Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, David Lynch's *Eraserhead* and more-recent films like *Seed of Chucky*, *Trick 'r Treat* and the Blu-ray release of the *Alien* film series (via a cut-out Facehugger). Here is a look at some of the most-noteworthy paper mask promo items the *HorrorHound* staff have procured over the years! 

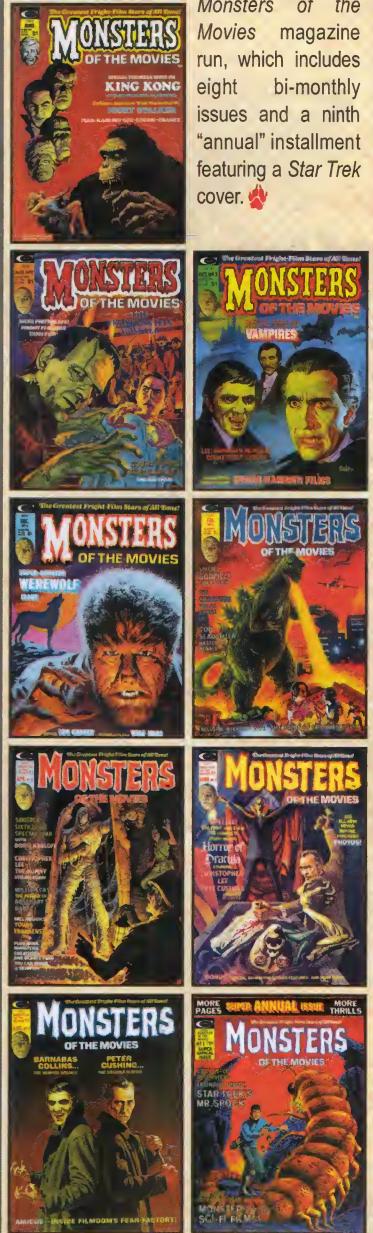


Cut-out masks featuring The Munsters appeared on the packaging-backs of holiday-themed Hostess cakes from the early 1990s.

# **Monsters of the Movies**

During the years of 1974 and 1975, Curtis Publishing, an imprint of Marvel Comics, released the comic magazine – *Monsters of the Movies*. An obvious competitor to *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, this nine-issue magazine run featured interviews and stories on then-topical horror features and hosted some of the most-amazing painted covers of the time from Marvel Comic's top-tier talent – including iconic imagery from *Dark Shadows*, Hammer Horror and *Frankenstein* (issue #2's cover in particular is one of the best, painted by Bob Larkin). Marvel made consistent strides at competing with Warren Publishing – having distributed other horror magazines such as *Monsters Unleashed*, *Tales of the Zombie*, *Tomb of Dracula*, *Dracula Lives* and *Unknown Worlds of Science Fiction*. Shown below is the entire

*Monsters of the Movies* magazine run, which includes eight bi-monthly issues and a ninth "annual" installment featuring a *Star Trek* cover. 



**Contemporary Bio-Graphics: David Lynch** (1992): Revolutionary Comics' biographical celebrity comic books featured a one-off story from the director of *Eraserhead*, *Elephant Man*, *Blue Velvet* and *Twin Peaks*.

# THE WALKING DEAD



NATHAN  
THOMAS  
MILLINER  
2011

# DEAD MAN WALKING THE LIFE AND TIMES OF RICK GRIMES

WARNING: COMIC SERIES SPOILERS ARE WITHIN THIS ARTICLE

BY NATHAN THOMAS MILLINER



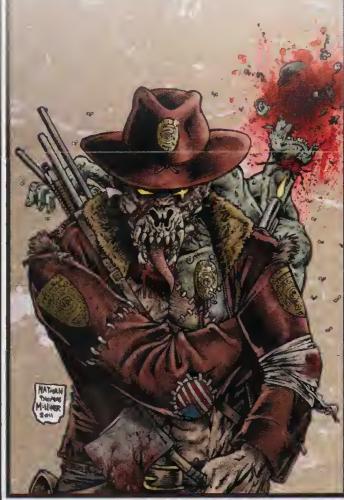
The kiddies' bellies were starting to ache as the candy corn and Pixie Stix overload began to take its toll. Mom and dad couldn't help themselves from cheating on their diets to sneak a mini-Reese's Peanut Butter Cup from the next-to-empty candy bowl they stocked earlier for this year's crop of trick or treaters. It was near the witching hour on this sacred Halloween night in the year of our Lord, two thousand and ten, that millions of unsuspecting people turning their televisions to AMC were about to get the biggest shock of the night. *The Walking Dead* was about to become a cultural phenomenon. But not everyone was shocked that night. No, on that October 31st, the mommas and the pappas, and even the swollen-bellied kiddies, were about to discover what comic book fans had known since 2003 – that *The Walking Dead* was going to be the best damn TV series in years.

While I'm a comic book creator myself, I honestly haven't been much of a comic book reader since the mid-1990s when the "Age of the Collectors" caused the industry to implode. I would pick up the occasional title, one recommended by a colleague or one released by a former hero of mine, but in 2004, I picked up the first trade paperback of the new zombie comic series *The Walking Dead*. And thus began the saga of Sheriff's Deputy Rick Grimes and his neverending trials throughout the zombie apocalypse.

Published by Image Comics, a comic book company that was formed by the hottest comic artists of the early '90s, (such as action-figure mogul Todd McFarlane) after leaving Marvel Comics to present their own creator-owned titles such as *Spawn*, *WildC.A.T.S* and *The Maxx*. *The Walking Dead* was the brainchild of then up-and-coming comic writer Robert Kirkman and his longtime collaborating artist, Tony Moore, who first met Kirkman in junior high. The team of Kirkman and Moore started out of my own home state of Kentucky as self-publishers with their popular indie title *Battle Pope* under the label Funk-O-Tron. Shortly afterwards, Kirkman landed a gig with Image writing a comic titled *Super Patriot*, and then a second, *Tech Jacket*. Kirkman hit gold in 2003 when he co-created a superhero comic for Image called *Invincible* which Paramount Pictures bought the film rights to, and then re-teamed with Moore to invent *The Walking Dead* that same year.

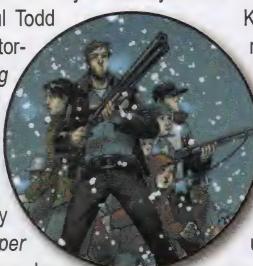
Did you ever wonder what happened to Peter and Francine after they flew away from the rooftop of the Monroeville Mall at the end of *Dawn of the Dead*? Did they find another sanctuary? Did the copter crash? Did they live, die, and if so, how? This was the selling point for Kirkman when he pitched *The Walking Dead* to Image Comics: *The Walking Dead* would be "a zombie movie that doesn't end."

*The Walking Dead* opens with Kentucky (changed to Georgia in the TV series) Sheriff's Deputy Rick Grimes – a good man who always tries to do the right thing – who is shot on duty and falls into a coma. Rick awakens some time



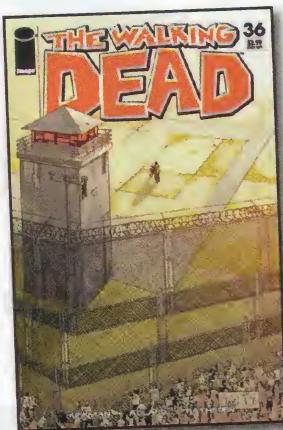
later in an abandoned hospital (some fans of the TV series made the unavoidable comparison that the opening of *The Walking Dead* is very similar to that of the mega-hit plague film *28 Days Later*, but this must have been coincidence in that both the comic and film were created and released the same year). Rick soon discovers that the dead now walk the Earth and he becomes a man determined to find his wife, Lori and their young son, Carl. A man named Morgan, holed up in a neighbor's house fills Rick in on what has happened and directs him to Atlanta where his family may have traveled since the government was offering sanctuary there. So Rick, on horseback after running out of gas, rides into the home of the Braves searching for his family, only to find a death trap that he barely escapes, if it not for the assistance of expert scavenger Glenn, a Korean teenager looking for supplies for his camp of survivors. As luck would

have it, Glenn takes Rick back to his camp leading to reveal that Lori and Carl are part of the group. Turns out, Rick's partner and best friend, Shane, took care of his family during the outbreak. Although we soon find out that he took a lot more than care as it is revealed that Shane has been sleeping with Lori and he is insanely in love with her – a fact that causes much stress when Lori turns up pregnant. Rick's return is not a welcomed one for the alpha-male Shane must now contend with his long-lost dead friend who quickly becomes the leader of the camp, not by choice, but by nature.



Kirkman wasn't sure if *The Walking Dead* would last, so he admittedly rushed the first six issues more than he originally wanted to. Some diehard fans of the comic have expressed their anger towards the TV series because in the comic – as its faithful readers well know – Shane is killed at the shocking conclusion of issue six. With a second chance, the creators of the show are going with the original drawn-out plans, exploring the possibilities of the love triangle between the three main characters in the story. The TV show continues to go in its own direction, yet all of the book's characters have seen very little change if at all, which is really the most important thing when adapting a popular piece of literature to the screen. You can expand and make left turns here and there, but never mess with the characters that the fans love – like Dale, the surrogate father figure who becomes a lover for tough girl, Andrea (although the show aged Andrea by 10 years), after her sister Amy is killed in a zombie attack. One of the coolest characters in the book – Andrea goes from scared young girl to strong, badass sniper and one of the clan's major players in survival.

Soon after the death of Shane, the camp decides to leave Atlanta as snow begins to cover the countryside. On the road, the group welcomes Tyreese (an ex-pro football player), his daughter and her boyfriend into their number. They make many attempts to find a sanctuary, including a gated subdivision and a farmhouse where they encounter many mainstay players in the overall series before eventually discovering the ultimate safe haven – a maximum security prison. A good bulk of the comic series takes place at the prison where many characters come and go, sometimes by zombie bites, but mostly at the hands of each other or themselves. This is one of the strongest elements of *The Walking Dead* in that



*Day of the Dead: The Rising of Bub* (2007): Dead Dog Publishing only released the first issue in their planned three-issue story arc based on *Day of the Dead*. A variant cover is also available.



Kirkman is always concerned with keeping the story as realistic as possible, and in reality, people would die ... quite often. And no one is safe, no matter how big the character is to the story. I've often compared *The Walking Dead* to *The Sopranos* for this fact. No one is ever safe from death in their world.

Two of the most popular characters in the series are introduced during the prison arc. The first is ex-lawyer turned badass, katana-toting babe – Michonne

showing up at the prison like *Mad Max* out of the wasteland chained to two zombie pets who have had their jaw bones removed to keep them from biting her. Frank Darabont, the filmmaker of such Stephen King classics as *The Mist* and *The Green Mile*, who spent over six years trying to get *The Walking Dead* on TV has stated that he cannot wait to put Michonne's entrance on screen. The other character would be possibly the darkest, most evil son of a bitch any comic book has ever featured ... the Governor. Rick, Glenn and Michonne find their way to a small enforced town after tracking a helicopter crash. Here they meet self-appointed ruler and madman, the Governor, who imprisons, tortures, maims and rapes them – a man who feeds his zombie daughter the flesh of strangers and keeps a collection of 20 illuminated aquariums each filled with the decapitated heads of 20 still-living zombies as his own demented version of Must See TV. Did I mention that *The Walking Dead* is a comic that is definitely "For Mature Readers Only." That's right. *The Walking Dead* ain't your grandma's *Archie* books. This led many fans to question what the TV series will deliver considering the show is on basic cable. It has been reported that AMC told Darabont that they could faithfully translate everything but the "F"-word into the series, and so far they've lived up to that promise as the show is often surprisingly filled with very graphic material not normally seen on television this side of HBO (who turned down the show). In one of the more shocking moments of the book, the Governor cuts off Rick's right hand! Many rumors had been circulated that Michael Rooker's character of Merle Dixon on the TV series (who has never appeared in the comic) will return to become the Governor. In the show, Merle cut off his own hand to escape a zombie attack after being handcuffed to a rooftop by Rick – the amputated hand may have been passed to Merle as to avoid having the show's lead actor handless throughout the life of the series.

The prison stay doesn't end well; very few survive it, and in its wake, Rick begins to go a bit mad and Carl suddenly takes a more important role caring for his father. Morgan finally

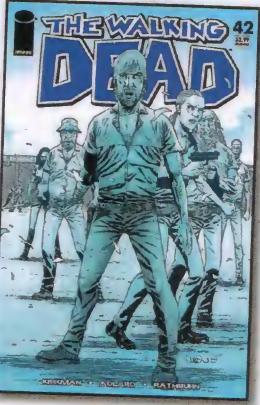
reunites with Rick, and after picking up a few more survivors, the group ends up where they have been wanting to be since the beginning – a community locked away from the zombie apocalypse where people are actually living normal lives as they did prior to the outbreak. It turns out that returning to a life of normalcy after a day-to-day experience of life or death isn't so easy. Like a soldier returning home from the war, Rick and his band of shell-shocked survivors have a hard time fitting in with "normal" folk who haven't been in the "shit."

Like the best of zombie fiction, *The Walking Dead* works because Kirkman focuses strictly on character development and social commentary. There was even a period where he received criticism from fans who complained that this "zombie" book was pretty scarce on actual zombies. The story is about people living in a world where the dead walk the Earth and life has changed, and how they themselves change as they deal with the situations presented in the journey. As stated in the book, Rick and his band "are" *The Walking Dead* referred to in the title, not the zombies.

*The Walking Dead* has won many awards and positive reviews along with a very loyal fan base of readers. Black and white comics don't usually sell well, but *The Walking Dead* has remained one of the best-selling titles on the comic racks. Artists Tony Moore and Charles Adlard (who took over as head artist of the book with issue seven when Moore's high-demand schedule forced him to leave the title, only contributing covers for a few years) both focus on tight storytelling and leave all of the flash and splashpage stylings that consumed sequential art in the early 1990s for a more straight-forward approach. They are both incredible craftsmen who have mastered visual storytelling while maintaining a consistency that is not very easy to pull off. Their art complements Kirkman's fearless writing, resulting in one of the best damn comic titles of the last 20 years. One of the main draws, for this fan, to the book is that I never feel safe in Kirkman's hands. I

I know that each issue will entertain and engage me while leaving me stunned and speechless on many occasions. The books are often disturbing, even haunting, and that is one of the major reasons why I consider *The Walking Dead* one of, if not my very favorite comic series of all time.

As I said in the beginning, *The Walking Dead* is the only title that I have read religiously over the past seven years, and if you are a zombie fan, then you have no excuse not to catch up on the tale of Rick Grimes and company as they face a dead world again, and again, and again. Month after month. Never ending. Just as Kirkman dreamed it could be.

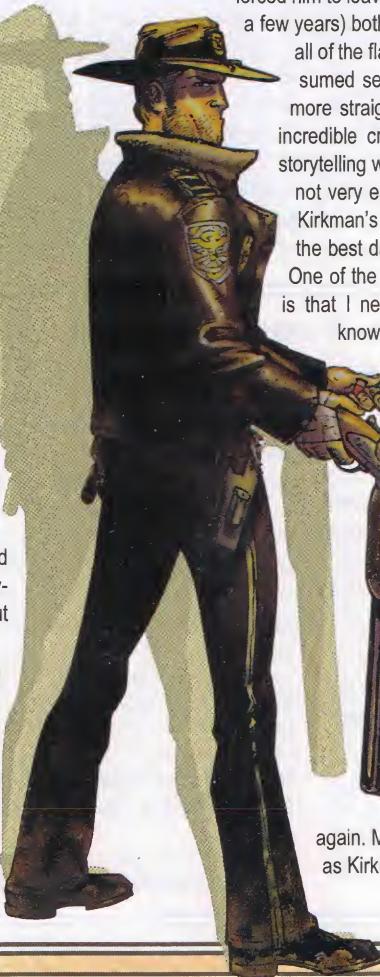


## Land of the Dead

In 2003 IDW Publishing released a five issue mini-series adapting George A. Romero's *Land of the Dead*. The first issue featured three covers with each subsequent issue hosting an art and a photo cover each. Every issue was written by Gabriel Rodriguez with art by Chris Bolton. The following year a trade paperback was released archiving the five-part story and featured seven new pages of story and art which included a deleted scene from the film, as well as including a cover and art gallery.



**Shaun of the Dead** (2005): IDW Publishing released a four-issue mini-series (and TPB) for Edgar Wright's *Shaun of the Dead* in 2005. A mini-comic was also published in *2000 AD* #1384 in 2004.



# I...VAMPIRE!

## A Room in the House of Mystery

by Jessica Dwyer

In the 1980s, DC Comics became the go-to place for horror fans thanks to their supernatural reading. Alan Moore's run on *Swamp Thing* occurred in that decade, as the *House of Mystery* was still open for business with some great stories hosted by the likes of Cain and his brother Abel (who had been living in the *House of Secrets*, another rest stop on the horror highway).

The *House of Mystery* hosted some amazing secrets via the gloriously shudder-filled issues released over the decade. But one story in particular would become so popular it had to move out on its own ... or at least demand an extra room or two. *I...Vampire* was a limited-run series that was supposed to only be a recurring short within the pages of *House of Mystery*. However, unexpectedly, the story's popularity started to encroach onto more and more pages. Eventually *I...Vampire* overtook the *House of Mystery* logo on the cover, and then nearly the entire comic book itself.

Created by J.M. DeMatteis, a prolific comic-book writer who has worked with many of the classic DC heroes such as Batman and Wonder Woman – *I...Vampire* first hit the pages of *House of Mystery* in 1981. The story is that of Andrew Bennett, a nobleman in the late 1500s who is bitten and cursed by a vampire. Bennett has a will of steel though, and fights his urges to feed on the blood of the living. He will not give into the hunger. However, Bennett is in love with Mary Seward (in a nod to *Dracula*), a beautiful red head who wants to be with him forever. Bennett breaks his vow of not feeding on another human being, as he makes Mary a vampire, which turns out to be a huge mistake.

Mary, unlike Andrew, gives in to her vampire ways whole heartedly and becomes Andrew's greatest enemy in the process. Over the centuries, she grows in power and becomes known as Mary Queen of Blood and starts a cult of followers. Andrew, distraught with both the pangs of denying his hunger and guilt at the lives Mary has destroyed, vows to stop her.

Over the years, Andrew garners two primary allies. One is a Russian named Dmitri, who has been with Andrew since he was a child saved from the clutches of Mary. The other is Deborah who becomes Andrew's lover after he also saves



her from Mary. The three spend the series trying to stop Mary's cult "The Blood Red Moon."

*I...Vampire* featured some truly dark storylines which focused on Andrew's tortured nature. His desire for blood represented an addiction and the fight between them was a primary part of the series. This added to Andrew's heroic appeal though, as he managed to keep himself in check and was determined to atone and find redemption for his past. He would even go up against the likes of Batman in an issue of *The Brave and The Bold*.

The series eventually ended with a massive showdown between Andrew and Mary which was a tragedy on many levels. Andrew succeeded in stopping Mary, yet he wouldn't know the cost paid in doing so.

You can't keep a good vampire down, of course, and Andrew Bennett was resurrected over the course of other DC Universe titles such as *Doctor Fate* and *Tales of the Unexpected* to name a few.

On a personal level – I loved this series, having read it when I was around 8 or 9 years old, and I still have the entire run of issues in my collection. The style of the comic is really beautiful, with the color red being a major factor. But the story was also a nice change, with the vampire truly being the hero, even if he was flawed. And the twist of the woman he loved becoming the thing he hated the most was also new. Mary became true evil and Andrew had to face the fact he was the cause of that corruption, no matter the intent and love behind it. ... Plus, he just looks cool and kicks ass.

J.M. DeMatteis created a great character in Lord Andrew. Even if he is considered a tier two in the world of DC, he has shown himself to have as much staying power as a vampire could, and he is still popping up as recently as the 2010 DC Universe Halloween special.

J.M. DeMatteis answered some questions for *HorrorHound* about his long-lived creation (though he admits it has been awhile since Bennett and Mary splashed and clashed across the colored page). It's great to get insight into one of the forgotten gems of DC's horror crown.

## An Interview with *I...Vampire* Creator: J.M. DeMatteis

**HorrorHound:** With this comic you sort of switched the tried and true story of the female "bride of the vampire" being a victim and made her the villain. What made you go that route and how was that received when you brought the plot to DC?

**J.M. DeMatteis:** My memory – and remember, this is a long time ago, at the very beginning of my career – is that editor Len Wein (one of the best editors, and nicest guys, I've ever worked with) had the title *I...Vampire* in mind and asked me to come up with an idea. I went home and started writing. When I create it's often very spontaneous, so I wasn't thinking about breaking any pre-existing molds, I was just following the characters to see where they led me. The dynamic between Andrew and Mary just happened on the page. Len was very enthusiastic about the story when I brought it to him.

**HH:** The noble vampire type like Andrew Bennett wasn't quite as popular back in the early '80s (with only a few exceptions). What other writers and vampires helped shape your hero?

**J.M.D:** Believe it or not, I wasn't much of a vampire aficionado, beyond the *Dracula* movies I watched as a kid. I read Bram Stoker's novel – and loved it – in college. That said, something about the genre must have grabbed me. A year or so before I got into comics, I took a screenwriting course at the New School in Manhattan and the script I wrote was called

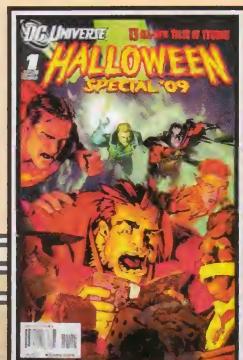
*Greenberg, the Vampire*. It was based on a short story I'd written and evolved into a graphic novel at Marvel Comics a few years later.

When I started working at DC – on the horror-anthology titles – I wrote lots of vampire stories ... mainly because, well, they were horror books. You had to write about vampires and werewolves and things that go bump in the night.

All that said, there was clearly something about the vampire – the built-in metaphor that the vampiric condition provides (a metaphor for just about anything the writer cares to layer on top of it) – that I found very appealing. In both *I...Vampire* and *Greenberg* – and later in my Epic Comics series *Blood: A Tale* (which we later moved over to DC's Vertigo line) – I used the vampiric journey as a metaphor for our search for purpose and meaning, our longing to connect with God and find some kind of redemption. I've never been attracted to the vampire-as-monster. I like the idea of a vampire who's aware that he's cursed and is searching, desperately for redemption.

**HH:** The series' popularity sort of took over *House of Mystery*. Was this a surprise at DC and how did the company react?

**J.M.D:** I honestly don't remember it being much of a big deal



**DC Universe Halloween Special (2009):** As stated above, Andrew Bennett has appeared in a few comics since his story wrapped up in *I...Vampire*, including two DC Halloween Specials released in 2009 and 2010.

## Elvira's House of Mystery (1986)

Elvira took over the *House of Mystery* name for her own series which lasted for 11 issues and a special one-shot. Both Marvel Comics and Claypool also featured Elvira-starring comic series over the years.



at the time. I created the series, wrote the first half-dozen or so episodes, then jumped ship to Marvel when they offered me a contract. Looking back, the fact that the series continued on for some time after I left, and that it's still remembered today, is very gratifying.

**HH:** Bennett was a very tragic figure, not only having the woman he loves betray him, but losing nearly everyone he ever befriended due to her and sacrificing everything to stop her. Was there any sort of attempt to lighten the story or try to have it end (at least in the original run) on a happier note?

**J.M.D:** If I would have had a chance to write an ending for the series, Bennett would have absolutely found a way to redeem himself and Mary.

**HH:** Was there any one plot line for the series that sticks out in your mind as a favorite that you can recall?

**J.M.D:** I enjoyed the story about the Zen vampires. (I brought them back almost a decade later when I guest starred Bennett in *Doctor Fate*), but my favorite was the issue that filled in Dmitri's back story, when we learned that this old man had been at Bennett's side since he was a little boy.

**HH:** The artwork and design for *I... Vampire* is truly beautiful with some really bold colors and surrealistic visu-

als. What inspired that tone and look to the comic?

**J.M.D:** I certainly described the characters and the mood in the scripts but, in the end, the visual look was defined by Tom Sutton – an extremely talented artist who knew how to do mood and mystery. It was a pleasure working with him on the project.

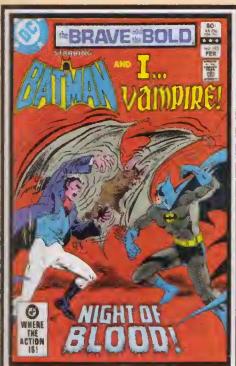
**HH:** Bennett had a crossover with Batman and has since shown up in other DC titles over the last few years. Who would you like to see him come up against that he hasn't had a chance to, and are you surprised by the staying power of this character?

**J.M.D:** Yes, I'm very surprised by his staying power. He was really a minor character in the DC Universe, appearing in a very minor book.

I'd actually love a chance to write Bennett again and perhaps give his story a genuine finale – have him find that redemption he's been seeking for so long.

**HH:** I've been telling people whenever I think they might have the ability or interest about Andrew and *I... Vampire* as I'd love to see it made into a film. Who would you cast if you had your pick of anyone to bring him to life on-screen?

**J.M.D:** No one springs immediately to mind – but I would cast someone a little older, mid-to-late '30s, with some lines on his face and real spiritual and emotional heft. A British actor, of course, and preferably one with a sense of Shakespearean gravitas about him.



**The Brave and the Bold** (1983): Issue #195 of DC Comic's team-up title, *The Brave and the Bold* featured a one-off story starring Andrew Bennett of *I... Vampire* and Batman!

# CREEPSHOW

A HORRORHOUND RETROSPECTIVE

BY NATHAN HANNEMAN

When the decision to dedicate an entire issue of *HorrorHound Magazine* to the world of horror comics was made, it was without hesitation that *Creepshow* was chosen as our retrospective feature for the issue. We started developing this issue nearly a year ago – and when that much prep work goes into an issue in advance, it is very frustrating (yet almost expected) when an unforeseen issue wreaks havoc on your plans. The release date for the *Fright Night* remake was shifted – and therefore so must our planned coverage and retrospective for that vampire feature. Our blood-sucking themed articles now had to integrated into our comic book issue. Since choosing between retrospectives was nearly an impossible task, we decided to keep both. Which is ultimately fitting for this issue, considering that both *Fright Night* and *Creepshow* exemplified the fun humor and sheer terror of 1980s horror films. Slashers set aside, it was the monster movies that truly impacted the genre of the time. In *Fright Night*, we had Jerry Dandridge's grinning vampire bat and Amy's monstrosic smiling demon face. But in *Creepshow* we had arguably the best monsters of the time caught on film – the Crate Monster, "Fluffy" (as he was affectionately known on-set) ... "Nate Zombie" (played by a well-hidden John Amplas) ... and who could forget the moss-covered Stephen King in the saddest, yet silliest, segment of this amazing anthology horror film?

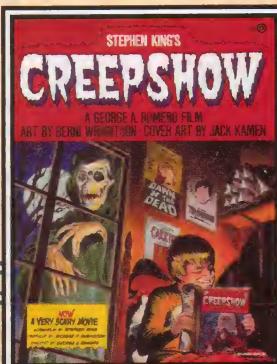
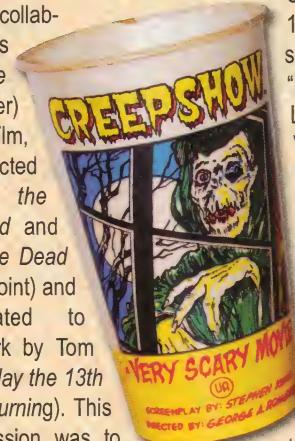
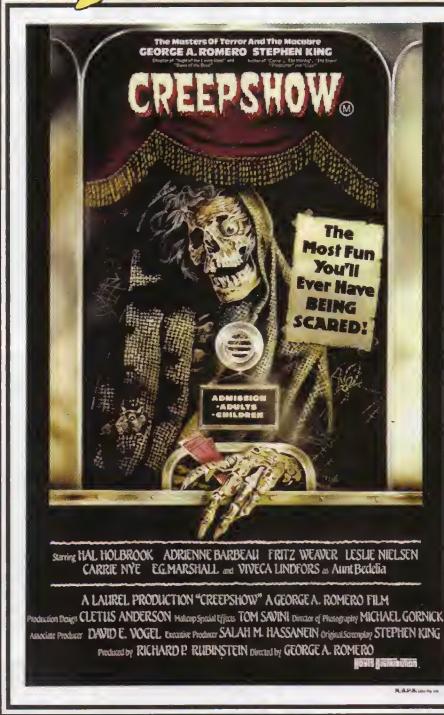
*Creepshow* was created by a virtual dream team – the collaboration of several of the horror industry's greats – as it was written by Stephen King (whose films, *The Shining*, *Carrie* and *Salem's Lot*, had made the author a star the world over) – directed by George A. Romero (the father of the zombie film,

having directed *Night of the Living Dead* and *Dawn of the Dead* up to that point) and was treated to effects work by Tom Savini (*Friday the 13th* and *The Burning*). This team's mission was to make a living, breathing EC comic book paying homage to the story-telling medium that had influenced both Romero and King's careers so heavily. Not only was there an amazing amount of talent behind the camera, but those attending to the acting aspect were impres-

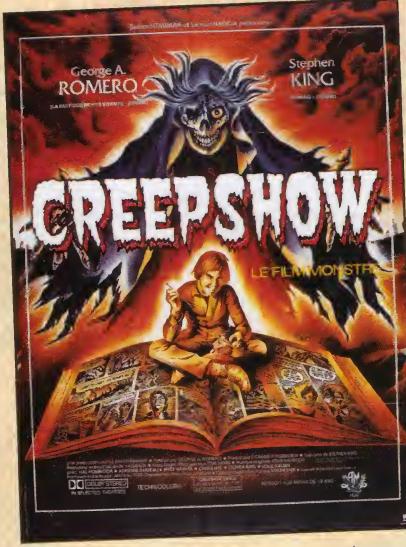
sive in their own rights. Such names as Hal Holbrook, E.G. Marshall, Ted Danson, Leslie Nielsen, Ed Harris, Adrienne Barbeau, Tom Atkins and even Stephen King himself (in his acting debut) helped make this one of the most superior cast lineups for a horror title of that decade. Even Stephen King's son, Joe (author Joe Hill) appeared in the film via bookending segments starring himself and Tom Atkins. Atkins portrays the young boy's father, who is angered at his son's fascination with horror comic books. This storyline interweaves and connects the short stories of this anthology found within the young boy's discarded comic book.

*Creepshow* was released in 1982 and comprised of five short stories which included "Father's Day," "The Lonesome Death of Jordy Verrill," "Something to Tide You Over," "The Crate" and "They're Creeping Up on You!" Each episode was written for the screen by Stephen King with the exception of "The Crate" and "The Lonesome Death of Jordy Verrill" (originally titled "Weeds"); those two stories were actually adapted from previously published Stephen King short horror tales – "The Crate," having first appeared in a 1979 issue of *Gallery Magazine* and "Weeds" in *Cavalier Magazine* in 1976.

The movie boasted some of the scariest and silliest stories imaginable – a perfect blend of horror and comedy. The first in this five-story anthology was titled "Father's Day" and revolves around a family of money-grubbing descendants attending a dinner party. Their grandfather, Nathan, has come back from the dead looking for his lost Father's Day cake and killing off his heirs, one by one. The segment was played straight, and as a result



*Creepshow* (1982): Published by Plume Books, a comic adaptation of *Creepshow* was released with art by Berni Wrightson – one of the coolest movie-to-comic translations to date!



instantly sets *Creepshow* up as a serious film, with serious scares.

Those scares were accented by the creepy soundtrack composed by John Harrison, who also scored Romero's *Day of the Dead* and part of *Tales from the Darkside: The Movie*. The soundtrack is a popular collectible and can be found on vinyl and CD, ranging between \$20 to \$60 in price, depending on the format and condition. Even this magazine's managing editor, Aaron Crowell, considers it the best horror movie soundtrack of all time. ...

In "The Lonesome Death of Jordy Verrill," a simpleton country bumpkin finds a meteor, and after touching it, soon becomes infected with a moss growing on everything

said meteor came in contact with. Most of this story plays out in the character's head (played by King) as he goes through an array of thoughts, from excitement to fear, before realizing a horrifying conclusion.

"Something to Tide You Over" brings the viewers back into the world of horror as a young, cheating couple (played by Ted Danson and Gaylen Ross) are buried up to their necks on the beach property of a possessive Leslie Nielsen after he discovers his wife's infidelity. After meeting their end, the couple come back for water-logged revenge.

In "The Crate," Hal Holbrook utilizes a mysterious crate, which contains what can only be described as a wild hairy beast, to rid himself of his nagging wife. A stand-out storyline and this writer's personal favorite!

Finally, "They're Creeping Up on You!" can be pinpointed by many as the reason for thousands (if not millions) of nightmares. E.G. Marshall plays a wealthy Howard Hughes type who lives in a hermetically sealed apartment, but becomes a victim when his home is overrun with killer cockroaches – or is it all in his head?

Shot in Pittsburgh, much like most of George A. Romero's films (at least the ones made within the year's of his early career), *Creepshow* is considered by many as the only



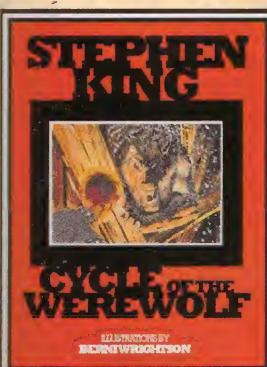
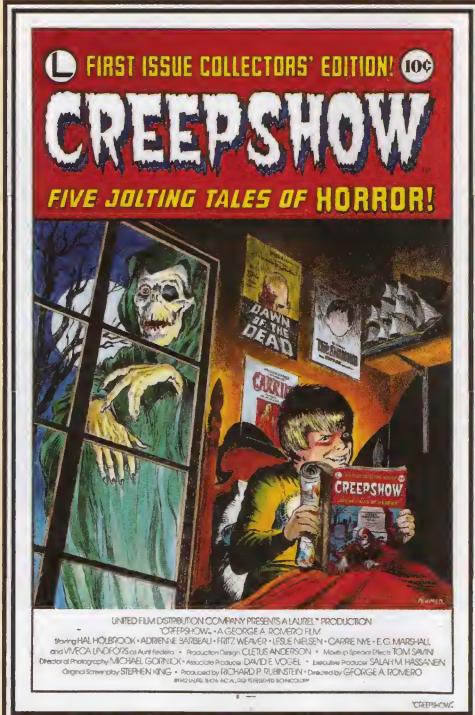
## Creepshow 2

Discussions of a sequel eventually resulted in a somewhat lackluster follow-up, which rolled into theaters on May 1st, 1987 – five years after the original.

Romero, who was neck deep in his television series, *Tales from the Darkside* (more on that later), opted out of this sequel and instead served as a producer and screenplay writer, reworking short stories by Stephen King. Tom Savini also returned to handle aspects of the film's effects and reprise his role as the "Creep" – the host of the movie, which he also portrayed in the original film. The major shift in quality for this sequel was the fact that it only featured three stories.

The first segment in *Creepshow 2* was titled "Old Chief Wood'nhead" and revolved around a group of thieves who rob and kill an elderly couple who operate a general goods store in a run-down Southern town. The couple's shop happens to have a wooden cigar store Indian on their front porch, and after the murders, the inanimate object somehow comes to life, tracks down the gang and seeks revenge for his one-time owners. This episode faced harsh criticism due to its cartoonish execution.

Easily the coolest segment in *Creepshow 2* was "The Raft," about a group of young college students who decide to visit a closed lake for a



*Cycle of the Werewolf* (1983): Stephen King wrote this short novel with illustrations by Berni Wrightson. While not a comic book, it's still noteworthy for horror comic fans. It was later filmed as *Silver Bullet*.

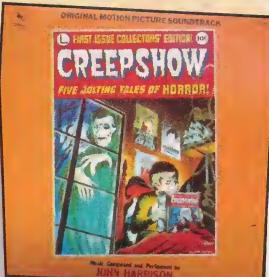


DICONO CHE A MEZZANOTTE... ACCADANO COSE SPAVENTOSE...

## GEORGE A. ROMERO CREEPSHOW

L'ultimo, terrificante capolavoro  
del maestro americano dell'orrore

LA FILM E' ADATTA PRESENTANDO UNA PRODUZIONE LAUREL "CREEPSHOW" UN FILM DI GEORGE A. ROMERO  
CON HANNAH STAPLETON, RAY BURGESS, FORTIN VAYER, LESLIE NELSON, CAROLE NYE,  
CON LA PARTEZIONE DEI G. MARSHALL E VIVECA LINDFORS DA BABELA (DIRECTED BY JOHN HARRISON)  
PRODOTTO DA RICHARD P. RUBINSTEIN. SCENEGGIATO DA GEORGE A. ROMERO  
PRODUTTORE ESECUTIVO SALAH M. MASSARI. REGIA DI STEPHEN KING. COMPOSIZIONE MUSICALE JOHN HARRISON  
SCHERZO DI PIANOFORTE: DAVID LUDWIG. MITOVI TORI



with the comedic, yet still somewhat-chilling story "The Hitchhiker," about a married woman who hits a hitchhiker on the highway after spending some time with a younger man. Driving away and leaving the hitchhiker for dead, the woman is soon haunted by the man – who repeatedly appears on the road ahead of her, attempting to hitch a ride. Eventually he turns up on the car, resulting in a mad dash through a wooded area. The woman ends up running over the hitch-hiker again and again until he is a bloody indistinguishable mess. But it doesn't stop him from claiming his revenge. This short was very popular at the time, if not only for the hit-and-run victim's amusing dialogue, as he screamed, "Thanks for the ride lady!" around three dozen times. ... In actuality, "The Hitchhiker" was almost a replacement in the original *Creepshow* for "They're Creeping Up on You!" when their initial selection started to turn into a logistical nightmare. Luckily the filmmakers stuck to their original plans, and "The Hitchhiker" has become synonymous with the sequel.

*Creepshow 2* was directed by Michael Gornick, who at the time had served as George A. Romero's cinematographer, having directed episodes from the anthology TV series

*Tales from the Darkside*. Gornick provided an amusing follow-up that many fans considered a decent sequel and installment in the *Creepshow* series; however, it did underperform comparatively to the original film's earnings (making approximately \$14 million).

Most fans who dismiss this film blame the lessened number of stories within the anthology. While the first film featured five stories with a live-action wraparound, *Creepshow 2* only included three stories (with an animated wraparound). ... and only two of which were good (seriously ... "Old Chief Wood'nhead"?). When the film was

quick dip. After swimming to a raft located in the middle of the lake, they are soon overtaken by a black floating sludge that eats living tissue like acid. The kids are stuck with no help to be found – easily making this the creepiest segment in the 'show.'

*Creepshow 2* ended

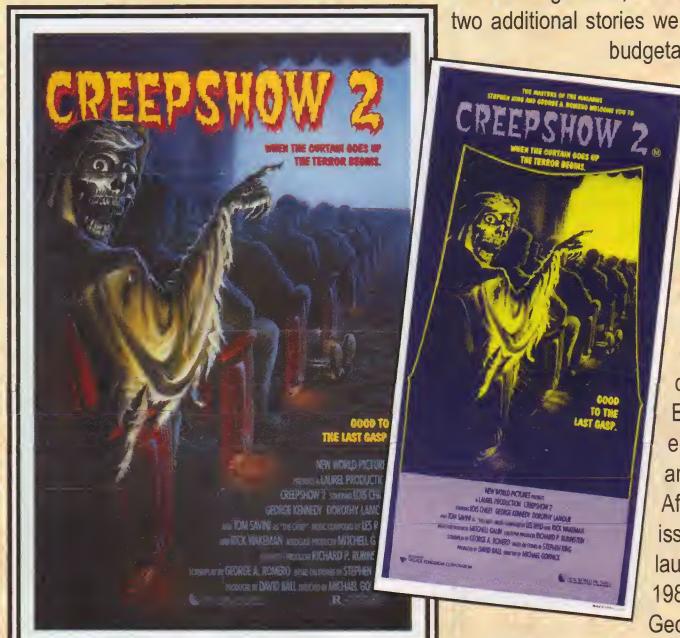
first placed into production, however, it was intended to include the five-story format of the original film. The "Cat from Hell" was the first story (after being axed it was later used in *Tales from the Darkside: The Movie*), while "Pinfall" was the proposed fifth. "Pinfall" was a Stephen King short about two

rival bowling teams, who happened to be ghosts. The two additional stories were unfortunately cut due to budgetary constraints. *Tales from the Darkside: The Movie*, in fact, is considered by many (including those who worked on the original films) to be the "official" third installment in the *Creepshow* series.

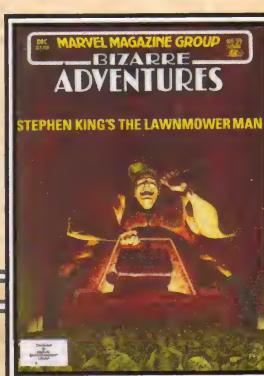
**Tales from the Darkside**  
*Creepshow*'s production company, Laurel Entertainment, initially wanted to launch a *Creepshow* anthology television series. After dealing with legal rights issues, the show was finally launched to great success in 1983 and was produced by George Romero. ... The show's

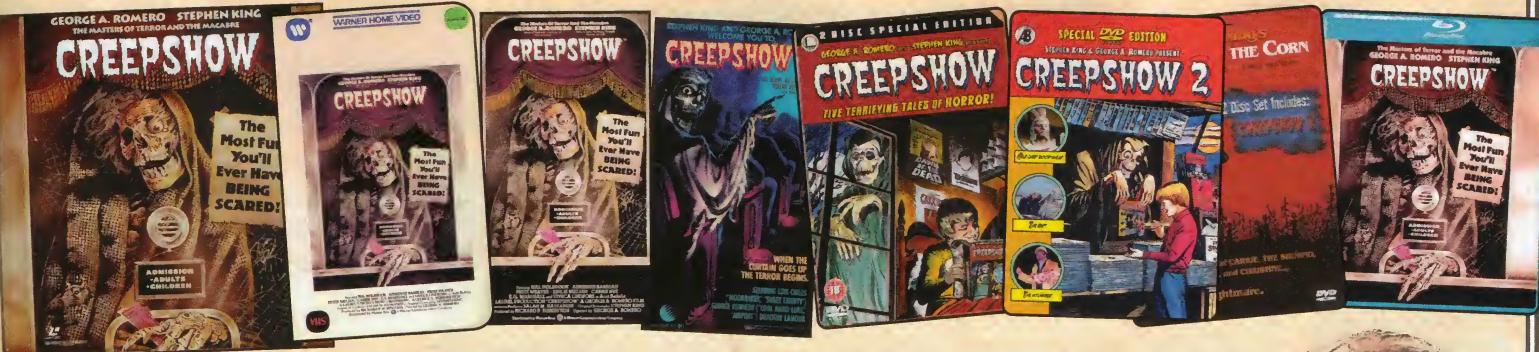
name was changed to *Tales from the Darkside* – thus leading to the "Darkside" feature film in 1990, and cementing, in many people's minds, the idea that it serves as a direct sequel to *Creepshow*. Directed by John Harrison (long-time Romero composer) and released on May 4th of 1990, *Darkside* starred Deborah Harry, Christian Slater, James Remar and Steve Buscemi and included stories about a cursed mummy who comes back from the dead, a demon cat from hell, and a man's promise to a demon. The stories were shorts written for the screen by George Romero/Stephen King, Arthur Conan Doyle and Michael McDowell. The "Cat from Hell" episode actually includes one of the most shocking moments one could imagine, as David Johansen (lead singer of The New York Dolls) plays a hitman hired to kill a cat. Eventually the cat "wins" and we witness a puke-inducing moment where the cat crawls out of the deceased man's mouth ...

*Tales from the Darkside: The Movie* actually grossed more at the box office than *Creepshow 2* with an estimated \$16 million. Whether you choose



**Lawnmower Man** (1981): Released as a stand-alone story within Marvel Magazine's *Bizarre Adventures*, Stephen King's *Lawnmower Man* was based on his short story (collected in *Night Shift*) – not the sci-fi movie.





to consider it a legitimate sequel or not, it was definitely a great addition to the limited subgenre of horror anthologies.

The *Tales from the Darkside* television show aired from 1983 to 1988. The year *Darkside* went off the air, Laurel Entertainment launched *Monsters*, another anthology television series that, aside from the opening credits, looks and feels just like *Darkside*. Yet another continued spin-off from the success of the original *Creepshow*.

### *Creepshow 3*

In 2006 Taurus Entertainment Company utilized the rights to the name and format of *Creepshow* to produce an unofficial sequel to the series titled *Creepshow 3*. Directed by James Glenn Dudelson (who also directed Taurus' *Day of the Dead 2: Contagium*), *Creepshow 3* returned to the original film's format of five short stories – "Alice," "The Radio," "Call Girl," "The Professor's Wife" and "Haunted Dog." In this film all of the characters live within the same proximity and cross paths throughout each of the segments. The stories include everything from a mad scientist to vampires and ghosts. Most readers would agree that the less said about this film, the better – but it somehow managed to utilize the franchise name – so it is sadly part of *Creepshow* legacy. Upon its release, it was lambasted by fans and critics alike. It was released direct to video. Taurus has since announced plans to produce a DTV remake of the original *Creepshow* – in 3-D at that. Whether this release will actually come to light remains to be seen.

### Merchandising the Creeps

As far as merchandise goes, *Creepshow* has never really had a fair shake. Upon its release in 1982, it was met with a number of promo items, which included a cut-out mask and a full-color paper drinking glass. The most obvious must-own piece from the film comes in the



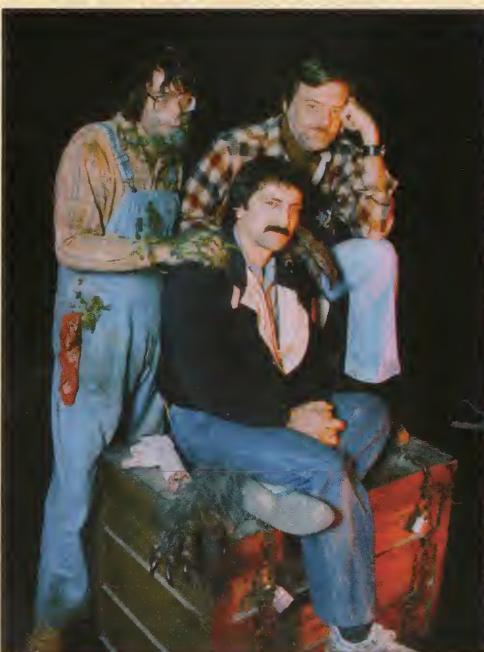
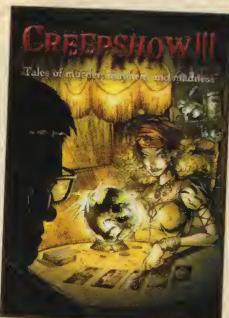
form of a graphic novel featuring the artwork of Berni Wrightson (and cover by Jack Kamen, who also did the comic art within the film). Each mini-story in the anthology is presented in comic book form, much like the stories are laid out within the film. In fact –

this is essentially the only major-release licensed *Creepshow* item ever produced. Topstone unleashed a limited number of Nate Zombie and Fluffy (Crate Monster) masks to the masses, as did Death Studios (albeit in a non-licensed format and in a limited run). Most collectors for this film tend to stick with paper items, however, there have also been a number of beautiful interpretations of the Creep host (from various countries) – some of which can be seen throughout this article. In recent years the UK ushered out a special-edition DVD of *Creepshow* which included almost every possible behind-the-scenes extra and interview you could imagine. For some reason, however, the US

license holder has zero interest in the title, nor its potential in any special-edition format on home video – leaving US fans in the lurch. Regardless, there are plenty of home video options for both films as well as collectable Laserdiscs, soundtracks and other "regular"-issue products.

### In the End ...

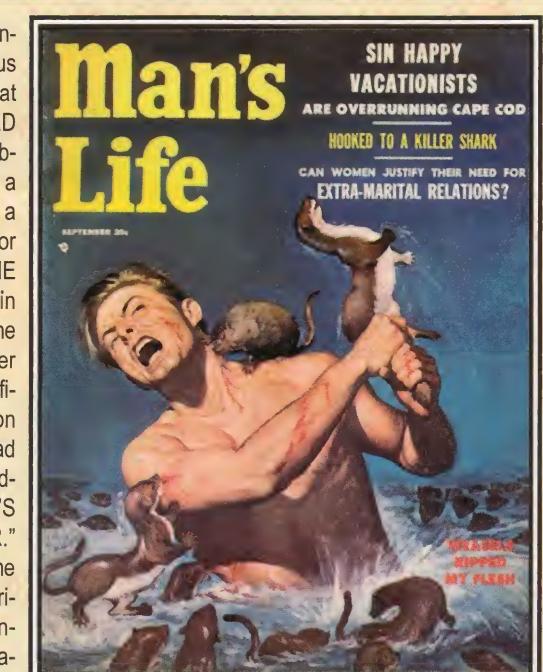
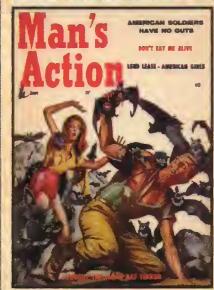
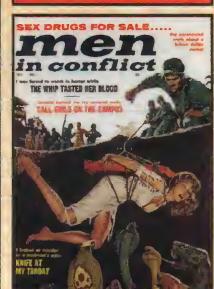
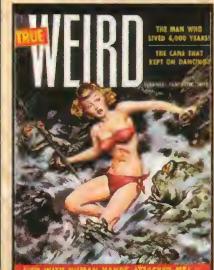
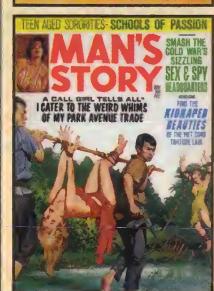
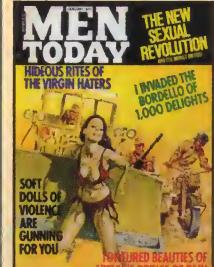
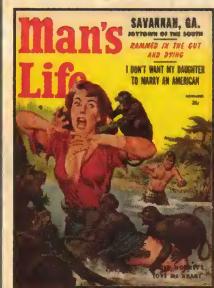
*Creepshow* stands as one of the more important films of the early 1980s. If it wasn't for the work put into that project, which was based on the pure love of classic EC horror comic books, a multitude of other projects may not have come about. If it wasn't for *Creepshow*, there would be no *Tales from the Darkside* (or any of the dozens of followers). We may have never seen HBO's *Tales from the Crypt* television series (nor the now-iconic Cryptkeeper who has hosted various movies and animated shows). To examine the impact of this brilliant little film on the industry only reveals the layers and layers of influence it has had on the directors, writers, effects artists and fans of the genre today.



*Night of the Living Dead* (1991): Fantaco released a number of one-shots and mini-series based on George A. Romero's original "Living Dead" feature, including stories titled "London" and "Zombie Genesis."

# THE WILD, WEIRD WORLD OF VINTAGE MEN'S ADVENTURE MAGAZINES

by Bob Deis with Aaron Crowell  
images provided by Richard Oberg



gonzo realm of vintage men's adventure mags yet, here's a brief overview to get you oriented.

## THE SWEAT MAGS

The men's adventure magazines that tend to attract the most fans – and critics – are those with bondage and torture scenes on the covers. The most notorious and most sought after are the Nazi covers. These generally show Nazi officers and their underlings

torturing scantily clad women or sexy women in Nazi uniforms abusing male prisoners of war (providing inspiration for Nazisploitation movies like *Ilsa: She Wolf of the SS*).

Since men's adventure magazines flourished during the Cold War years, evil Commies are also commonly shown as the torturers on "B&T"-themed covers. Sometimes the bad guys (or gals) are evil "Japs," Amazonian natives, American Indians, Satanists, psycho killers or motorcycle-gang members.

If you actually read the stories that go with these covers, you discover that they are a bit tame compared to today's standards. The violence, sex and language is nowhere near as explicit as what you'll see in a modern horror movie or an episode of *Dexter*. Even the "cheesecake model" photo spreads that were a common feature in most men's adventure mags are relatively mild – typically looking more like *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue pics than *Penthouse* spreads.

Meanwhile, Web sites like eBay made it much easier to find and buy old men's adventure mags, making them increasingly popular as collectors' items. Surviving issues – though estimated

However, even by contemporary standards, the bondage and

torture scenes on men's adventure magazines are bizarre

amount to only one percent of the issues published – are now accessible to anyone with an internet connection. In addition, auction sites specializing in original art from vintage comics and magazines, such as Heritage Auctions (HA.com), have sought out cover paintings and interior illustrations done for men's adventure magazines and made them widely available.

Awareness of men's adventure magazines has also been enhanced by a growing number of Web sites, blogs and Facebook groups, where fans post cover scans and discuss the magazines. Naturally, many of those enthusiasts are also horror fans. (What true horror fan wouldn't like a magazine genre that features blood-thirsty, killer creatures and evil fiends torturing barely clothed babes?) If you haven't delved into the

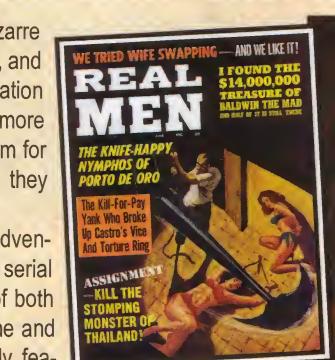
scenes on men's adventure magazines are bizarre enough to offend many people, particularly women, and to draw comparisons to 1970's splatter and exploitation films, Italian giallo and cannibal movies and the more recent "torture porn" flicks. They often draw criticism for the violence, sadism, sexism and casual racism they depict.

In addition, critics like to point out that men's adventure magazines were popular with some famous serial killers, like Ed Gein. Gein had a large collection of both men's adventure magazines and vintage true crime and detective magazines, a genre that also commonly featured images of bound and abused women.

Peter Vronsky's book *Serial Killers: the Method and Madness of Monsters* says that Gein claimed he got the idea of skinning the heads of his victims from men's adventure magazines. Indeed, many issues did have stories about headhunters and some included stories about Nazis making lampshades or other heinous accessories from human skin. Of course, as Vronsky also notes, the *Bible* was the favorite reading matter and inspiration for a number of other famous serial killers, such as Gary Ridgway and John Wayne Gacy.

## THE IRONIC EFFECTS OF CENSORSHIP

Oddly, mainstream fans of the *Bible* played an unintended role in the development of the men's adventure magazine genre. In the mid-1950s, hysteria created by Dr. Fredric Wertham's book *Seduction of the Innocent* and pressure from Christian groups



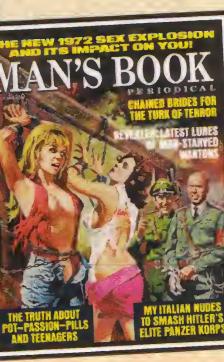
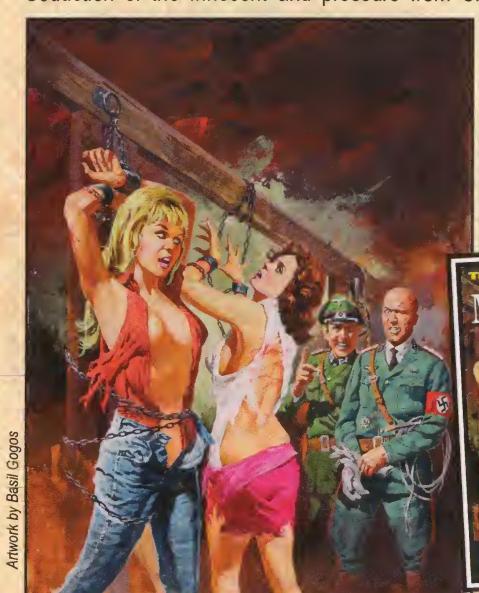
resulted in the puritanical "Comics Code," which essentially banned violence and any hint of sexuality in comic books. This forced many popular horror, suspense and mystery comics out of business – and led several major publishers of comics to move into the men's adventure magazine market.

For example, in addition to putting an end to William Gaines' legendary EC Comics, the Comics Code killed off the horror, suspense and war-themed comic books published by comic book pioneer Stanley Morse, including *Weird Chills*, *Weird Mysteries* and *Battle Cry*.

In 1955, Morse responded by transforming his popular *Battle Cry* comic book into a men's adventure magazine. It turned out to be more popular than the comic and was published until 1970. The success of *Battle Cry* led Morse to publish many other men's adventure magazine titles that featured artwork and stories far more violent and sexy than the wildest seen in the Golden Age of Comic Books, including *All Man*, *Champion for Men*, *Man's Adventure*, *Man's Best*, *Man's Prime*, *Men in Conflict*, *Real Action*, *Real Men*, *Real War*, *Rugged Men*, *Spur*, *War Criminals* and *Women in War*.

In addition to targeting comics, Christian groups like the Catholic League of Decency also crusaded against men's magazines that showed photos of nude or bare-breasted women. The "League" and other groups pressured local stores to remove such magazines from their shelves, especially if they had nudity on their covers.

Ironically, men's adventure mags showing paintings of women in their underwear being tortured by naughty Nazis were deemed less offensive than "girlie mags" that showed women's naughty bits. Thus, men's

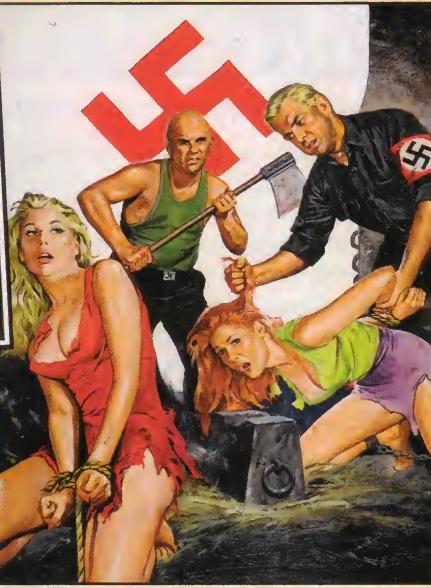
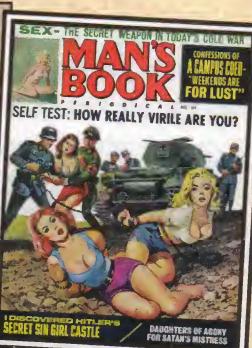
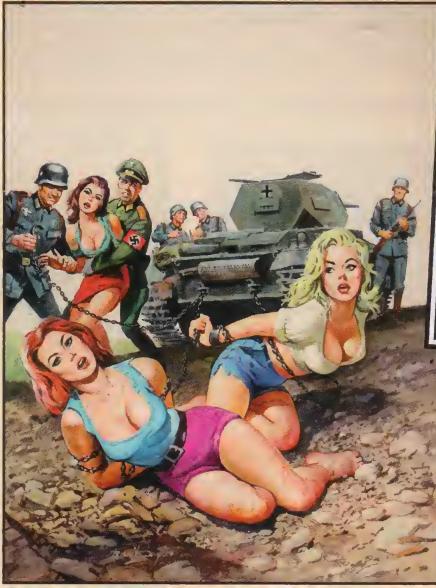


*Classics Illustrated: Frankenstein* (1958): Norman Saunders painted a number of covers for Gilberton Publications' *Classics Illustrated*, including their adaptation of the Mary Shelley novel, *Frankenstein*.

*Aurora Model Kits* (1961): James Bama's amazing artwork featured on the covers of the original Aurora model kits helped drive the success of the monster craze throughout the '60s and '70s.



all images provided and property of the Rich Oberg collection



adventure magazines were usually sold openly at most stores.

But there was a final irony to come. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, U.S. Supreme Court decisions dramatically

undercut traditional anti-pornography laws. This opened the floodgates that allowed girlie mags with nude cover photos and full-frontal photo spreads to dominate the men's magazine market. Some men's adventure titles continued on for a while, but only by morphing into nudie mags themselves. By the end of the '70s, the traditional men's adventure magazine genre was extinct.

#### OTHER COMMON IMAGES AND THEMES

The men's adventure magazines with the sadomasochistic bondage and torture covers helped give men's adventure magazines the nickname sweat magazines. But, in fact, the true sweat mags – those that regularly featured B&T cover paintings, such as *Man's Book*, *Man's Story* and *World of Men* – are actually a subgenre of men's adventure magazines.

Another subgenre that tends to have special appeal to horror fans is comprised of issues that feature killer creatures attacking manly men, scantily clad women or both. Sometimes the creatures are actually dangerous, such as lions, tigers and bears. The "oh my" comes when you find out that many of the killer creatures featured on men's adventure magazine covers and in their stories are absurdly unlikely killers, including everything from lemmings to turkeys.

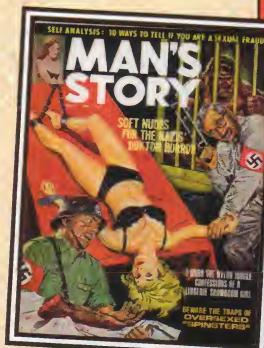
The most famous example is the cover of the September 1956 issue of *Man's Life*. It shows a bare-chested, bleeding man waist deep in churning water being attacked by a

horde of weasels, created for the "true" story inside "WEASELS RIPPED MY FLESH!" (They were apparently relatives of the flesh-rip-

ping squirrels mentioned above.)

In 1970, Frank Zappa immortalized that headline by using it as the title of an album by his band, The Mothers of Invention. Although Zappa picked a different bizarre cover painting for his *Weasels Ripped My Flesh* LP, his fans and fans of vintage magazines eventually connected the dots to the September 1956 issue of *Man's Life* cover and made it one of the best known of all men's adventure mag covers.

Other types of scenes commonly depicted on men's adventure magazines include exotic adventure scenes with dangerous or alluring "natives," Western scenes, ship-

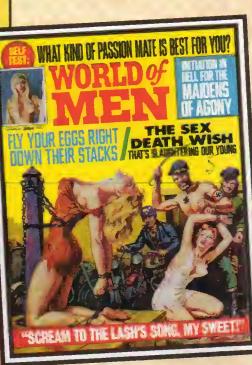
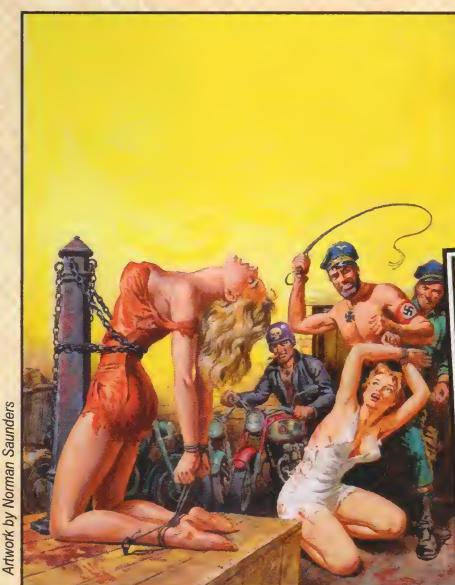


wreck and lifeboat scenes, and scenes featuring juvenile delinquents or motorcycle-gangs. Naturally, since part of the main target audience of men's adventure magazines were military veterans of World War II and the Korean War, images of soldiers and battle scenes were also common.

#### NOTABLE ARTISTS

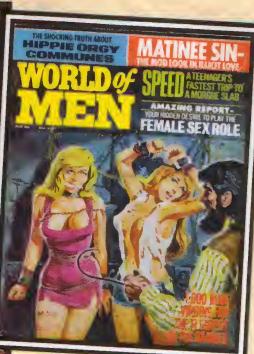
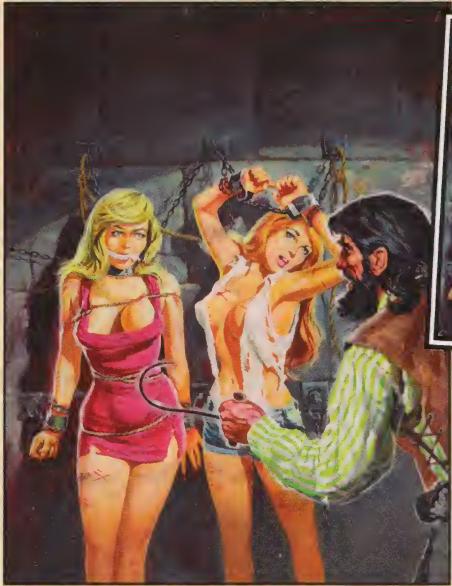
Hundreds of illustration artists created cover paintings and interior illustrations for men's adventure magazines. Along with pulp paperbacks, they provided a major and crucial market for many professional illustrators of the era, during decades when mainstream magazines moved primarily to using photos for their covers and stories. The artist most closely associated with the bondage and torture sweat mag cover subgenre is Norm Eastman.

Eastman is best known for the many classic Nazi B&T cover paintings he created. He painted



*Eerie* (1968): Basil Gogos also lent his amazing talent to not only *Famous Monsters*, but to *Creepy* and *Eerie* magazines as well.

Artwork by Basil Gogos



Emtee), such as *Man's Book*, *Man's Epic*, *Man's Story*, *Men Today*, *New Man* and *World of Men*.

In 2003, comic and pulp collector and expert George Hagenauer did the only known interview with Eastman, who died four years later. During their discussion of Eastman's famous (and infamous) Nazi covers, Eastman noted

that publishers Ampolsk and Rosenfeld were both Jewish.

"Ampolsk and I would

meet over the covers and talk about what we were going to do," Eastman said. "Over time, I made

a whole list of torture methods. Starting with fire, water, stretching, ice and electricity, we'd go through the list and come up with something that we hadn't done before. Ampolsk once told me in all seriousness that we had never done anything that the Nazis hadn't actually done."

Horror fans who know of Norm Eastman generally know him solely from his over-the-top sweat mag covers, though he also did other illustration work, including many cover paintings for romance novels. There are several other artists who worked for men's adventure magazines and are better known to horror fans than Eastman, but not for their men's adventure illustrations.

For example, most *HorrorHound* readers are probably aware of the legendary cover paintings Basil Gogos created for the Warren magazines *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, *Creepy* and *Eerie* in the late 1950s and 1960s. You might also know of

most of those, as well as B&T covers featuring evil Commies, Japs and natives, for sweat mags published by B.R. "Bud" Ampolsk and Maurice Rosenfeld (through their companies Reese and

the more recent horror-themed album covers he did for Rob Zombie, The Misfits and Electric Frankenstein. You may not know that in the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s, Gogos regularly

did cover paintings and interior illustrations for men's adventure magazines. Some were sweat-style bondage and torture scenes, along the lines of Eastman's paintings. (One of my favorite examples is the exotic B&T cover painting used on the April 1964 issue of *Man's Action*, for the story "MY MELANESIAN BRIDE OF TERROR"). Gogos also did great battle scenes, luscious "good girl art" covers and many other types of illustrations for men's adventure magazines.

Norman Saunders, who started as an early pulp magazine cover artist and became best known to many horror and science-fiction fans for his wild *Mars Attacks* trading card paintings, also did many covers and interior illustrations for men's adventure mags.

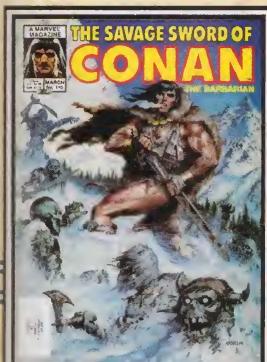
Artist Earl Norem probably did even more cover paintings and interior artwork for men's adventure magazines than Gogos and Saunders combined. But most horror and fantasy fans are more familiar with the great cover paintings he did for Marvel Comics, particularly the ones he did for *The Savage Sword of Conan* series.

The artist who painted the famed "WEASELS RIPPED MY FLESH" cover, Wilbur "Wil" Hulsey (sometimes credited as "Will"), did many other popular killer creature and "good girl art" cover paintings for men's adventure magazines.

Some other notable illustration artists who were regular contributors of cover paintings and interior art to men's adventure magazines that *HorrorHound* readers may know include: John Duillo, who also painted some of the covers used for the classic *Conan*

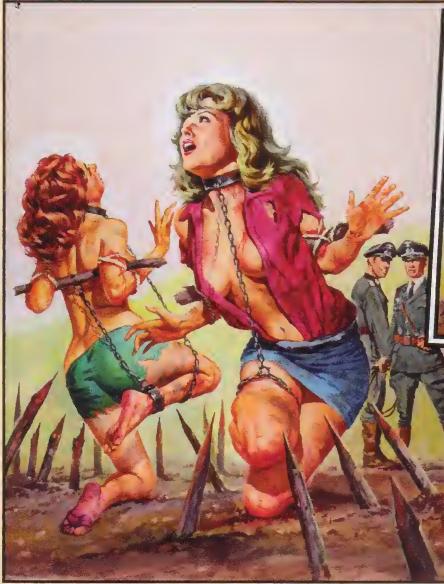


Artwork by Earl Norem



*The Savage Sword of Conan* (1993): Artist Earl Norem may be most well known for his work on Marvel's *Savage Sword of Conan*, he was also responsible for Mattel's *Masters of the Universe* product art.

Artwork by Basil Gogos



series published by Lancer Books (along with fantasy-fan favorites Frank Frazetta and Boris Vallejo); Vic Prezio, who also did cover paintings for comics and Warren horror magazines; Mort

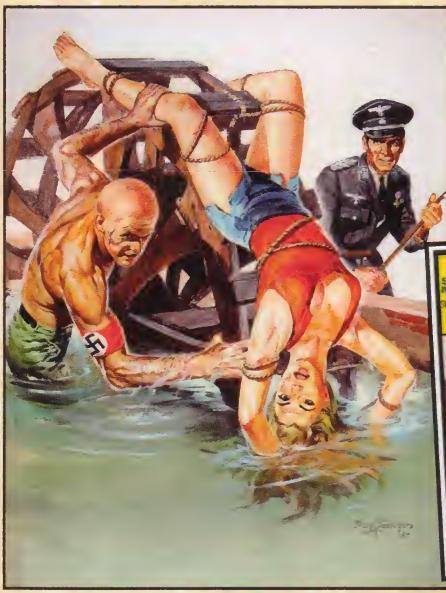
Kunstler, who went on to become one of America's top painters of historical art and is now especially known for his Civil War paintings and James Bama, who created the highly popular paintings for the Aurora Plastics' Universal movie monsters model kits and painted nearly 70 of the great Doc Savage paperback covers for Bantam, using frequent men's adventure magazine model Steve Holland as the model for Doc.

#### MAJOR PUBLISHERS

Publishers B.R. Ampolsk, Maurice Rosenfeld and Stanley Morse, mentioned above, were among the dozen or so publishers who dominated the men's adventure magazine market. Another was Everett M. "Busy" Arnold. Like Morse, Arnold had previously been a publisher of comic books, including Will Eisner's *The Spirit* and Bill Ward's sexy *Torchy* comics. In the wake of the mid-1950s comics hysteria, Arnold sold his comic properties to DC and published a number of highly collectible men's adventure magazines, through his companies Arnold Magazines and Natlus, including *Rage for Men*, *Gusto*, *Man's Peril*, *Rage* and *Wild for Men*.

Another notable publisher of men's adventure magazines was Robert C. Sproul, best known as the original publisher of the *Mad* magazine competitor *Cracked*. Sproul's company Candar Publishing put out some of the wilder sweat mags, including *Daring*, *Man's Daring*, *Man's True Danger*, *True Danger* and *Wildcat Adventures*.

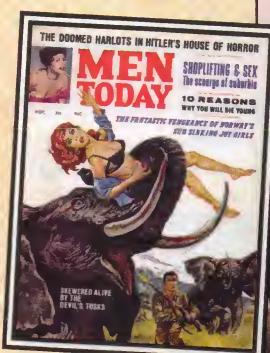
A pair of famous broth-  
ers who created their own unique style of men's adventure magazine were publishers Joe and Ben



Weider, owners of the Weider bodybuilding and fitness empire. Weider magazines in the men's pulp mag genre included *American Manhood*, *Animal Life*, *Fury*, *Mr. America*, *Outdoor Adventures* and *Safari*. The Weiders also published the only two



Artwork by Norm Eastman



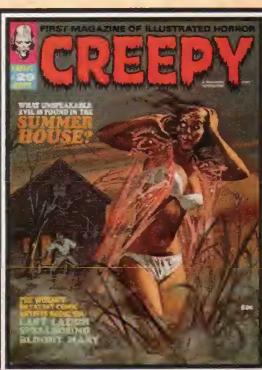
Artwork by Norm Eastman

men's adventure magazines that primarily focused on stories involving monsters, ghosts, vampires, witchcraft, aliens, the occult and other horror and fantasy-related topics. They were titled *True Strange* and *True Weird*.

*True Weird* was particularly out there. One of its cover paintings, done by the great pulp artist Clarence Doore, is a particular favorite of mine. It shows a babe in a bikini surrounded by creatures that seem to be part fish, part frog and part human. The title of the story it's for is "FISH WITH HUMAN HANDS ATTACKED ME!"

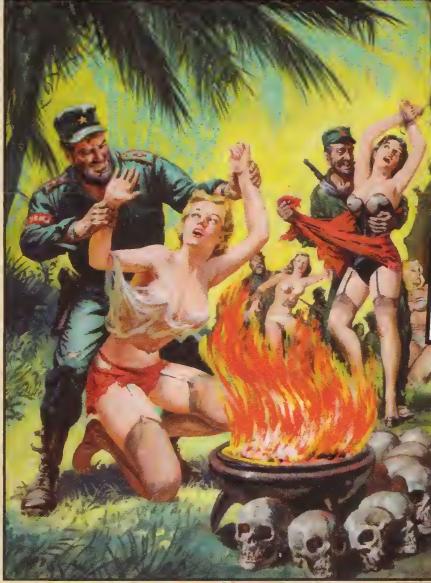
The credit for publishing the longest list of men's adventure titles goes to the legendary publisher Martin Goodman. Goodman started out publishing pulp magazines in the 1930s. He added comics to his publications in 1939 when he created Marvel Comics (which he sold in 1968, after his staffers Joe Simon, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee created the basic foundation for the Marvel we know today).

In 1950, after watching the success of *Argosy* and *True*, Goodman created two of the most iconic and longest-lasting men's adventure magazines, *Stag* and *Male*. During the next two and a half decades, various Goodman companies within the overall banner of his Magazine Management group published more than 20 other men's adventure magazine titles, including *Action for Men*, *Action*



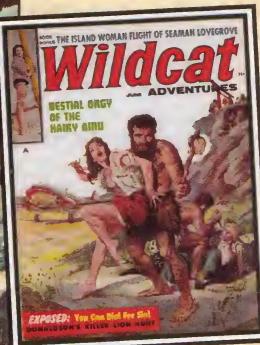
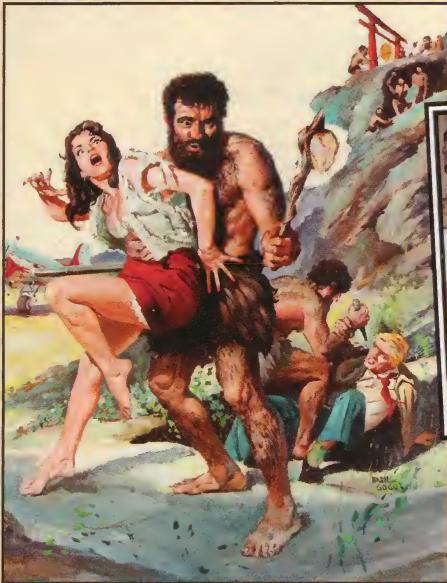
**Creepy** (1969): Vic Prezio contributed artwork for various Warren products, including *Famous Monsters*, *Creepy* and *Eerie*.

Artwork by Norman Saunders



Life, Adventure Life, Adventure Trails, Battlefield, Complete Man, Fishing Adventures, For Men Only, Hunting Adventures, Ken for Men, Man's World, Men, Men in Action, Real Life, Sport Life, Sportsman, True Action and War.

Artwork by Basil Gogos



Between the early 1950s and mid-1970s, most of the best known men's adventure magazine artists created cover

paintings and interior illustrations for magazines published by Goodman. He also had a knack for hiring editors and writers who went on to wider fame, such as Bruce Jay Friedman, Mario Puzo, Mickey Spillane, Ernest Tidyman and Martin Cruz Smith.

#### TIPS FOR NEWBIES

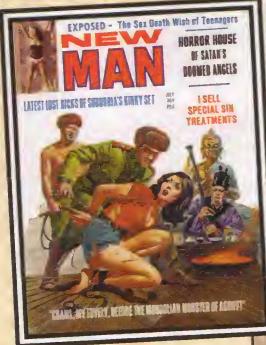
If you want to learn more about vintage men's adventure magazines, start by buying the books *It's a Man's World* and *Men's Adventure Magazines*. Then, delve deeper by reading some of recently published books about the illustration artists who worked for the genre, including the books about Basil Gogos, Norman Saunders, Gil Cohen and James Bama.

Online, there are some excellent sites about illustration artists that showcase examples of men's adventure art, such as the American Art Archives Web site, Mort Kunstler's site ([KunstlerIllustrations.com](http://KunstlerIllustrations.com)), and the Norman Saunders Web site and [PulpArtists.com](http://PulpArtists.com), which are both maintained by Saunders' son David.

A few sites have extensive archives of men's adventure magazine cover scans, including CoverBrowser.com, StagMags.com and the amazing Galactic Central Magazine Database (at



**Frankenstein** (1963): On top of his work for Warren Publishing, Vic Prezio produced a number of comics for Dell, including their *Frankenstein* comic book released in 1963.



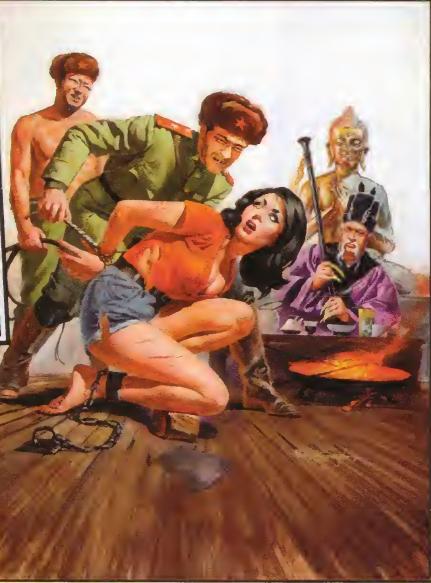
www.Philsp.com), which provides a wealth of images and info from many vintage magazine genres.

To date, the only site I know of that is solely dedicated to men's adventure magazines is my own, [www.MensPulpMags.com](http://www.MensPulpMags.com), the Men's Adventure Magazines Blog. There you'll find hundreds of high-resolution scans of men's adventure magazine covers, downloadable copies of stories, key facts about the magazines, and information about the publishers, artists and writers.

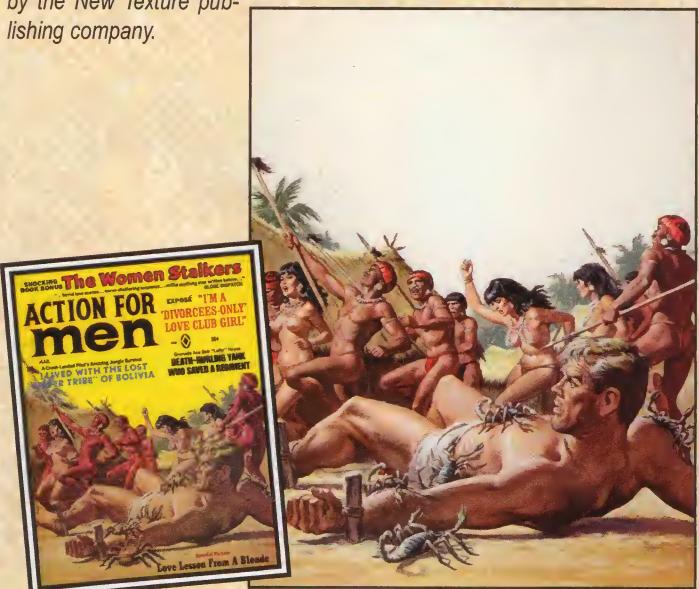
If you decide you want to collect men's adventure magazines, you're starting at a good time. In the "old days" before the Internet, they were not easy to find. Now, you can easily locate hundreds on any given day on eBay and "used" magazine sites. The prices vary widely depending the condition and scarcity of a particular issue, but most men's adventure magazines sell at reasonable prices, ranging from a buck or two to \$20 or \$30 per issue.

Of course, if you want something like a hard-to-find copy of the famed "WEASELS RIPPED MY FLESH" issue, or if you really gotta have a mint-condition issue of *Man's Story* with a Norm Eastman Nazi painting, it might cost a bit more — you might be bidding against me, Rich Oberg, and some of the other geeks I know who are hooked on men's adventure magazines. (But who are not, I swear, serial killers.)

*Freelance writer and vintage magazine aficionado Bob Deis is the creator of MensPulpMags.com, the Men's Adventure Magazines Blog. He's also the editor of the forthcoming book Weasels Ripped My Flesh!, an anthology of stories from men's adventure magazines slated for publication later this year by the New Texture publishing company.*



Artwork by Basil Gogos



Artwork by Earl Norem



Big, bad villains are nothing new to Marvel Comics. You've got beings like Galactus, The Sentinels, and more often than not, Magneto. These are only a few of the classic villains who've graced the colored pages of Marvel Comics, but perhaps the most classic villain of all time would be the king of the vampires, Count Dracula.

Dracula came to be a part of the Marvel Universe back in the '70s in a series called *Tomb of Dracula*. The series was very popular and pretty racy for a comic book line created by the same company that produced titles like the family-friendly *Fantastic Four*.

In the first part of the '70s comics saw a lifting on a ban that had kept them from writing and producing stories about many supernatural creatures one of which was vampires. Marvel quickly took advantage of this new freedom by creating a "living vampire" in the guise of Michael Morbius in the pages of *Spider-Man*. Morbius went on to become a success with his own series of comics and recurring appearances throughout the Marvel Universe.

But the company wanted something with more bite, and so they looked to making a comic dedicated solely to a bloodsucker. Dracula is the biggest name around when it comes to vampires (add to the fact that the character is in the public domain with a name that is already globally famous, and you can see why Marvel chose him).

Marvel started *Tomb of Dracula* alongside some other supernatural and horror centric lines at the same time. *Werewolf by Night*, *Tales of the Zombie*, and even a *Frankenstein* series were produced by the company all within a year or so of each other. *Werewolf by Night* saw a crossover with *Tomb of Dracula* which was quite popular.

The series was set in modern (at least at the time of publication) day. The main focus was the search by Rachel Van Helsing and Quincy Harker (descendants of Dracula's foes from the novel) to find the vampire lord and kill him. Satanic cults, angelic births, and zombies would all be major plot points in the story.

It was starting with issue seven that legendary writer Marv Wolfman came on board to write for the series. Wolfman is responsible for some of comics' biggest characters including Bullseye, Black Cat, and The New Teen Titans (to name a few). "I was not a vampire fan and frankly had never seen a *Dracula* movie," Wolfman told *HorrorHound*, "But I had read the original novel and did love that. Perhaps not being all that familiar with other vampire lore allowed me to be more original rather than mimicking someone else."

The series took a very different approach to Dracula, giving him a sense of menace and a nearly biblical mythology. At one point in the course of the series, he impersonated Lucifer. Dracula even had children, both of which wanted to kill him. Lilith, a daughter, and Janus the son of Dracula, one evil incarnate like her father and the other literally an angel.

"My thought with Lilith was to use the biblical Lilith, the first wife of Adam, who some called a vampire, to flesh out this legend," Marv explains, "By giving him a daughter as evil as he, and then, later, a son who was an angel, we could tug his emotions in two separate directions; one reminded him who he was and the other hinting at what he could have been had he not taken the path he had."

The storylines could get pretty extreme, but that was part of the appeal of the comic. Also, when you have a character like Dracula you expect grand-scale drama and stories. And *Tomb of Dracula* delivered with some of the most extreme storytelling to come out of Marvel up to that point. Did the publisher ever give Wolfman and his team problems with the content? He says no, but that's not to say there wasn't some push back.

"Not from Marvel; they let me alone and I did

# THE TOMB OF DRACULA

by Jessica Dwyer

what I thought was right for the comic," Wolfman says. "Also, I was the editor so I did exactly what I believed in, but the Comics Code had problems with almost every issue and we fought back and forth for years. I tended to go overboard in order to pull it back to where I wanted so they would feel they 'won' the fights."

Over the course of the 70-issue comic run other characters joined in the battle such as Frank Drake (a descendant of Dracula from before he became a vampire), and most notably Blade the Vampire Hunter who was first introduced in *Tomb of Dracula* and went on to his own fame and popularity, including three feature films and a TV series. Hannibal King also had his origins in the "Tomb" and appeared in the third *Blade* film as a main character.

The visuals were beautifully rendered by the artists involved. Most notably Gene Colan, the penciller, who brought a great use of shadows and darkness that suited the subject perfectly. "Gene's art was highly influenced by film noir movies," Wolfman says, "His work was brilliant and perfectly suited for this book."

Colan may have been influenced as well by Will Eisner's *Spirit* series as the color scheme for his "costume" was blue and red (not black). His Dracula was not based off any actor or representation to come before the vampire lord. He looked like actor Jack Palance who, oddly enough, played Dracula for *Dark Shadows* creator Dan Curtis a year after *Tomb of Dracula* started.

Marvel had Dracula fight against other characters from the studio over the years, even after *Tomb of Dracula* completed its original run. Which was Wolfman's favorite? "I think the Silver Surfer," He says, "Not only because he's the last character anyone would suspect I'd use, but also because he's the polar opposite of Dracula. Pure evil meets pure good. However, I made sure he didn't meet straight Marvel superheroes. And when the company insisted on doing that in a Marvel team-up book, I refused to write it."

The original run of *Tomb of Dracula* lasted until 1979 (the year that Dracula and vampires seemed to be everywhere.) *Dracula Lives!* was a magazine sized publication that began in 1973 as well as comic Giant Sized editions which were released while *Tomb* was being printed. *Dracula Lives!* ran for a lucky number of 13 issues, ending in 1975.

*Tomb of Dracula* was one of the first comic book series to have a villain as its main character. Dracula was not an antihero. He wasn't a good guy, he was in fact the bad guy and yet we rooted for him in these awesome comic books because he was so great at being bad (he did convince that whole Satanic cult he was the devil for a reason.) Marv Wolfman, Gene Colan, and the crew at

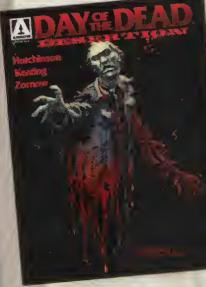
Marvel took a character from classic literature and updated him for the modern age, making something special which will always be a part of comic history.

*Tomb of Dracula* was a mainstream horror comic that helped lead the way to a new age of comic books and graphic novels. Series like Todd McFarlane's *Spawn*, *Evil Ernie*, and many others owe quite the blood debt to Dracula and his extended family.

Strangely enough, there aren't that many collectibles for fans to add to their own tombs inspired by the series. One of the most stunning is no doubt Jean St. Jean's *Marvel Legends* statue which was released a few years ago. Perhaps if we all growl loud enough Marvel will give us a bit more to chew on.

**The Tomb of Dracula (1973):** Blade the Vampire Hunter was created by writer Marv Wolfman and penciller Gene Colan – first appearing in *The Tomb of Dracula* #10 (shown at right).





## Mini-Comic Madness

Since the inception of DVD fans have been clamoring for exclusive content to accompany their favorite movie. In recent years, more tangible material such as booklets, figurines, statues and comic books have been packaged together with DVD releases, and one of the people most responsible for the comic book inclusion with these sets is writer Stef Hutchinson.

Stefan Hutchinson is an English writer known primarily for his work on the critically acclaimed *Halloween* comics and *Halloween: 25 Years Of Terror* documentary. His recent work includes *Battle Royale: Parent's Day*, *Demons 3*, and *Black Bear Blues* for the horror anthology *Moon Lake*. He

gave us a moment out of his busy schedule to discuss his involvement with Arrow Video and the production of this new run of mini-comic incentives, which are bonus items with various Blu-rays. ~ NH

**HorrorHound:** How did your relationship with Arrow begin?

**Stefan Hutchinson:** My relationship with Arrow Video came about through Barry Keating, a friend of mine who had previously worked on the *Hack Slash/Re-Animator* crossover with Tim Seeley. To cut it short, he had a friend who was a friend, etc., and through this chain, Barry and I submitted a proposal for a *Day of the Dead* comic book tie-in. The idea behind this was a fresh spin on bonus content. It's cool especially with older films because you can bring back actors who have long-since passed.



**HH:** How would you describe your job for Arrow Video?

**SH:** I just do the comics. That being said, I was more involved with the *Battle Royale* artwork/packaging as I brought Peter Fielding onboard (who I had previously worked with on *Halloween: One Good Scare*). He created the prints of the three major players within the film. In terms of the comics though, we do everything ourselves, including cover and contents, etc.

**HH:** How do the ideas for these comics come together and can you give us any idea of future comics you may be working on?

**SH:** The main thing for me when writing them is capturing the essence of the source material. So it's not just about familiar characters, but the themes that run through the films. With *Day of the Dead*, I tried to capture Romero's social commentary and its bleak view of humanity. With *Battle Royale*, it was about the generation gap and the pressures of success in Japanese society. *Demons 3*, by contrast, was less heady and with that I wanted to capture the pulp feel of the films. It reads like a 1970s Marvel horror book on steroids.

We don't have any immediate releases coming up with Arrow, so I've been spending my time writing some original material – I think at this stage I need to because so far, everything I've released is licensed material which, as great as it is, isn't enough. I need to bring my own boogymen into the world!

**HH:** You are most well known for your work on the *Halloween* franchise. What does the future hold for *Halloween* now that DDP is pretty much out of the picture?

**SH:** That's being figured out right now! It's something that's out of my hands, but I'm hoping to finish what we started! Jeff Zornow and I were just getting going when the rug was pulled out from under us, but all of the planning has been done. Fingers crossed. ...

**HH:** Do you have a lot of input from the original film writer/creators when working on these comics?

**SH:** There hasn't been any, sadly. Mostly the original creators don't have any involvement with their properties, so for that reason amongst others, I try to be very reverent to the source material. I'd love to get their involvement more – many of these people were my inspirations. \*

Various DVD add-in comics include *Silent Hill*, *Final Destination* and *Let Me In*.



## The DARKMAN of Comics

In 1990 Sam Raimi set out to create a horrific homage to super hero movies. The result was *Darkman*, starring Liam Neeson, Larry Drake and Frances McDormand. The film told of a mentally unstable scientist who seeks revenge against criminals who destroyed his life and viciously altered his appearance. Marvel Comics jumped at the chance to produce a three-issue mini-series based on the comic-centric film in 1990. A follow-up six-issue storyline was introduced in 1993. A magazine-sized adaptation of *Darkman* was also released in 1990, sporting amazing Joe Jusko artwork on the cover. In 2007

Dynamite Entertainment released a *Darkman vs. Army of Darkness* comic, mixing both Raimi-created entities. \*



**Trick 'r Treat** (2009): Wildstorm Publishing released a graphic novel based on the anthology horror title *Trick 'r Treat* in 2009, as well as a mini-comic printed for Comic-Con that same year.

# HORROR'S HALLOWED GROUNDS

BY SEAN CLARK

# HOUSE

The problem with doing a locations article on a low-budget film is there usually aren't very many locations to cover. Such is the case with Steve Miner's 1986 horror/comedy, *House*. In fact, there are so few locations that I decided to cover both the original *House* and its 1987 follow-up, *House II: The Second Story*.



All of the interiors of the house were sets built at Culver

street at 332 Melrose Avenue.

The cemetery where Roger's aunt's funeral takes place is a real cemetery, but the actual location is currently unknown.



Studios in Culver City, California. They even built a partial replica of the front of the house for the one quick shot where you see the house on fire.

The only home interior used that wasn't a set was the residence of George Wendt's character, Harold Gorton, located at 331 Melrose Avenue. The interior and exterior of this home was used.

Roger Cobb observes his hot neighbor, Tanya, jogging and entering her residence just across the



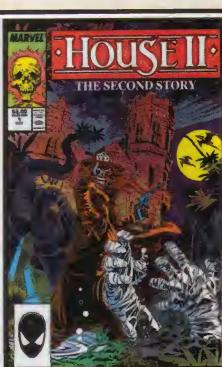
When you see the exterior of the "house" you are immediately blown away at how impressive this structure is. It really stands out compared to the other homes in this very normal, suburban neighborhood.

It's located at 329 Melrose Avenue in the city of Monrovia, California.



The location of the bookstore where Roger does his book signing was an actual bookstore, but unfortunately, this location is also unknown.

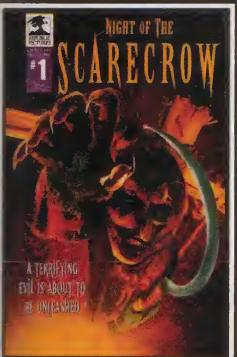
When Roger and his manager leave the bookstore they are heading down Ventura Boulevard and stop right in front of 12174 Ventura Boulevard in Studio City.



*House II: The Second Story* (1987): Marvel Comics published a one-shot comic adaptation of *House II*, in conjunction with the film's home video release, which was issued as a video store incentive.



All of the Vietnam scenes were also filmed on a set at Culver Studios except the one shot when Roger is in the water in Vietnam, which was filmed at Indian Dunes – the site of the tragic Vic Morrow helicopter accident that occurred during the filming of *Twilight*



*Zone: The Movie.* Also, it just happens to be the place I rode motorcycles as a kid!

The film's climax has Roger hanging from a cliff that his house is now on the edge of. This was a

special effect achieved by using footage they shot of a real cliff in Malibu. They even went as far as to throw a dummy of Big Ben off the cliff to the rocks below.

Now we move on to the sequel – *House II: The Second Story*. The “house” in question really isn’t seen very much in this film and if you pay close attention they seem to show the exact same day and night shots over and over.

Much like in the original, the title character is a very impressive structure. It’s known as the Stimson House located at 2421 South Figueroa Street in Exposition Park.

Built in the 1890s the three-and-a-half story brick home looks like a mini-castle hidden behind gates and fences near downtown Los Angeles. The house is right next to USC and was used as a fraternity house from 1940 to 1948 when it was sold to the

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet where it was used as a convent from 1948 to 1969. From 1969 to 1993, the house was converted to use as housing for students at Mount St. Mary’s College. In the fall of 1993, the sisters returned to Stimson House and resumed using it as a convent.

Like in the first film, all of the interiors were sets built at Culver Studios in Culver City, California.

The only other location in the film that wasn’t a set built at Culver Studios was the old west scene that was shot on the Columbia Ranch in their “old west” town.

This was also the location of Jesse’s burial, which was the last scene in the film, but oddly enough the very first scene filmed.

So I hope you enjoyed this two-for-one edition of Horror’s Hallowed Grounds. Until next time, happy hunting!



**Night of the Scarecrow** (1995): Republic Pictures produced this rare promotional comic book which was given away as an incentive to video store owners ordering copies of Republic’s latest film, *Night of the Scarecrow*.

SOME THINGS WONT STAY DEAD...



DIRECTOR  
**mary  
lambert**



**dale  
midkiff**



**denise  
crosby**



**miko  
hughes**



**brad  
greenquist**



**andrew  
hubatsek**

featuring a  
**PET SEMATARY**  
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BLOOD FOR BLOOD

# FRIGHT NIGHT

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JULY, 22-24 2011

GUEST OF HONOR



JOHN CARPENTER



VAMPIRES



HALLOWEEN



THE THING



ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK



THE FOG



THE THING



THE THING



THE THING



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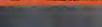
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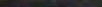
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IT'S THAT TIME OF THE YEAR AGAIN! RUBIE'S COSTUMES HAS RELEASED IMAGES AND INFORMATION ON A NUMBER OF NEW HALLOWEEN COSTUMES AND MASKS FOR THE 2011-2012 HAUNTING SEASON! WITH SO MANY LICENSES AT THEIR DISPOSAL (INCLUDING KISS, COWBOYS VS. ALIENS AND PRIEST), IT'S THE VILLAINS OF THEIR SCOOBY-DOO LICENSE THAT HAS THIS WRITER IN STITCHES! SUCH "DOO" BADDIES AS THE FUNLAND ROBOT, CLOWN, CREEPER, DISC DEMON AND DR. COFFIN ARE ALL COMING SOON!

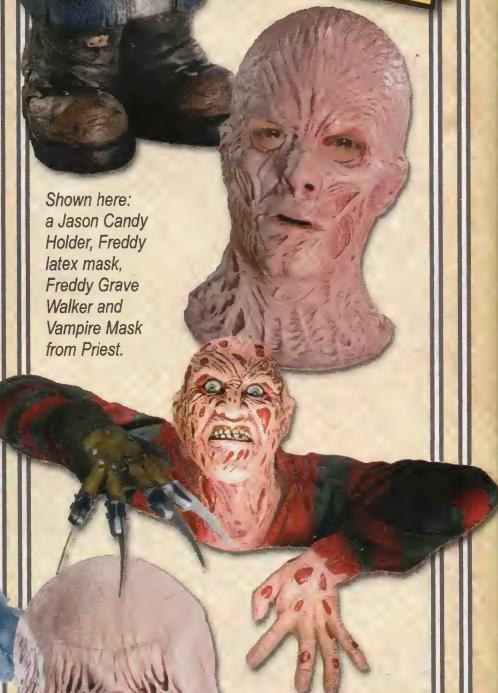
IN A SURPRISE MOVE BY RUBIE'S COSTUMES, STARTING THIS HALLOWEEN, A SLEW OF WALKING DEAD COSTUMES, MASKS AND FACE APPLIANCES WILL BE AVAILABLE IN HAUNT AISLES EVERYWHERE. COSTUMES AVAILABLE IN CHILD, TEEN AND ADULT SIZES. ON TOP OF THIS, RUBIE'S WILL BE RELEASING NON-WALKING DEAD ZOMBIE HALLOWEEN MASK/COSTUMES AS WELL.



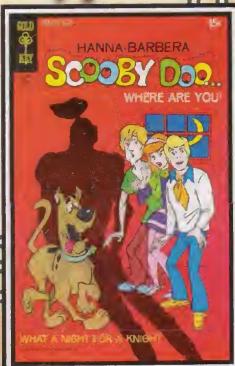
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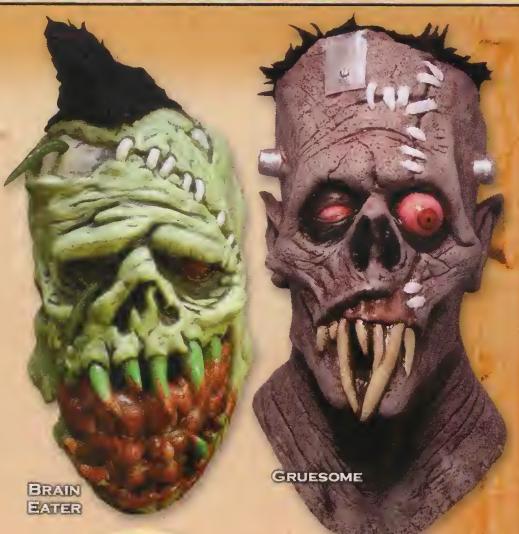
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# THEY CAME FROM THE KRYPT!

by Jon Riley

One of God's creatures that has plagued man, and the horror genre, from the beginning is the rat. Because of their reputation for spreading the black plague and countless other pestilence to destroying people's homes and possessions, they are rarely welcomed with open arms. Even a single rat can generate a lot of fear, not to mention if they are in larger numbers, or worse, bigger in size. In *Dracula*, Renfield conjures the image of thousands of rats surrounding the evil vampire lord. In *Bert I. Gordon's Food of the Gods*, they grow to the size of cows. The little beggars have always had a bad PR image, and rightfully so. This issue, as we descend down the darkened stairs into the Krypt, we take a look at a couple of movies that feature the "Rattus ratus," each very similar in ways, but also quite different. Both have literary origins and both were made in Canada. One is more suspenseful and realistic, while the other is pure '80s exploitation. So if you're thinking of investigating those faint, late-night scratching noises coming from who knows where, make sure you are prepared to do battle with one of man's oldest enemies, and one of nature's greatest survivors!

Best known for *Enter the Dragon* and other martial arts films, director Robert Clouse tended towards action-based efforts, being as he was completely deaf. He made one horror film, *The Pack*, back in 1977, which featured a group of wild dogs. In 1982, he returned to the genre with *Deadly Eyes*, again with another vicious pack of animals. Based on James Herbert's novel *The Rats*, these were no ordinary rodents, but ones that had been feeding on steroid-laced grain, causing them to grow to the size of small dogs. (In fact, dachshunds were actually used to double for the



pests on-screen, in little rat costumes!) When their food supply is destroyed, they move into the city ... searching for a new source.

Sam Groom plays a college teacher who teams up with a woman from the health inspection department to determine what is causing the recent increase in rat attacks. Clouse doesn't hold back when it comes to these sequences either. We learn right away that even children are not safe from these oversized, carnivorous beasts, their menace directly correspondent to their increased size. One by one, people are devoured by this ever-growing vermin population. Scatman Crothers, always entertaining to watch on-screen, has a small role as a field inspector who gets to check the sewers for the little critters.

While the dog/rats do look a bit cheesy every now and then, the attack scenes are pretty intense. Yes, we have some rat hand puppets for the close-ups, but we also see some explicit chomping going on with a lot of blood splashing, making these sequences surprisingly effective. Any time a pack of predatory creatures are chasing with the intent of chowing on whatever they can bring down ... that's a pretty scary notion, especially when you are the prey. There is even a part in a movie theater that offers a huge nod to William Castle's *The Tingler*. Overall, I think this one will have you thinking twice about venturing down dark alleyways or subways in any big city.

A year later, director George P. Cosmatos (*Rambo: First Blood Part II*, *Tombstone*) presented a much-different, more-realistic "tail" of a man's quest to regain control of his household – *Of Unknown Origin*. Peter Weller, in his first starring role, plays a corporate lawyer trying to make his way up the ladder. Living in a beautiful, self-refurbished

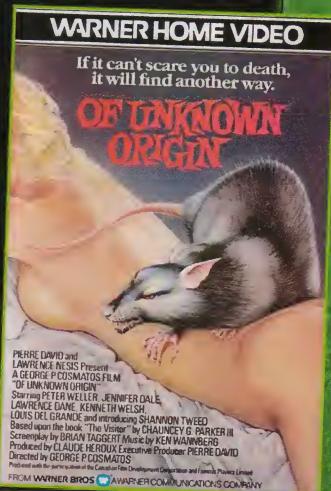
brownstone, having filled it with beautiful things, including his gorgeous wife (*Playboy Playmate* Shannon Tweed) and son – it seems that life is good. No ... life is great. As his family leaves for a short vacation, he stays behind because of work. Whereupon a large rat moves into the house, and Weller's personal outlook slowly starts to change, about himself as well as life as he knows it.

As Brian Tagger's screenplay includes subtle nods to *Moby Dick* and *The Old Man and the Sea*, the movie's main theme becomes clear: obsession. Weller becomes fixated on not letting his whiskered nemesis get the best of him, and the film becomes less about a rat infestation than it is about a man's mental and psychological breakdown as he rediscovers what is really important in life. In the beginning, Weller is presented as a neat freak, tending to all the finer things in his house, making sure that everything is in its place. But once the rat arrives, we

see him losing interest in his manufactured, manicured abode, focusing more and more on this pesky trespasser, with material goods becoming secondary to his and his family's personal domain. Even his all-consuming devotion to work becomes non-existent because, as one character succinctly explains, while Weller is only thinking about his foe 20 percent of the time, the rat is thinking about him 100 percent of the time, because "He's a rat. He's got nothing better to do."

Now, if you are one of those people that lie awake at night, trying to figure out where that noise you just heard came from and what made it, this film will undoubtedly set you on edge. Cosmatos and his behind-the-scenes collaborators (particularly Verzier's incredible camerawork) set up some great scares for the viewer – from the faint skittering behind the walls to the little pitter patter of footsteps above; they tap into some fundamental and primal fears. Never again will you stagger into the bathroom in the middle of the night and to use the toilet before first checking underneath the lid. You just never know.

So, there's our nice vermin-laced double feature to cozy up to with some popcorn and enjoy with the family. Just be aware that if you venture off to explore that scratching you hear, you just might Discover the Horror!



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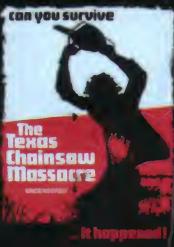
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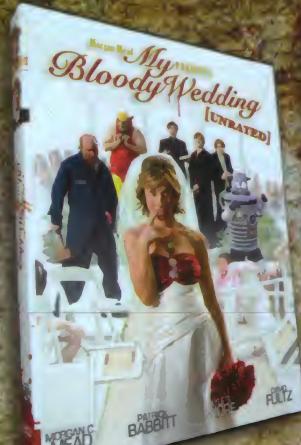
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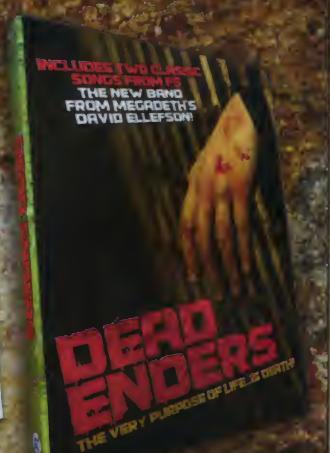
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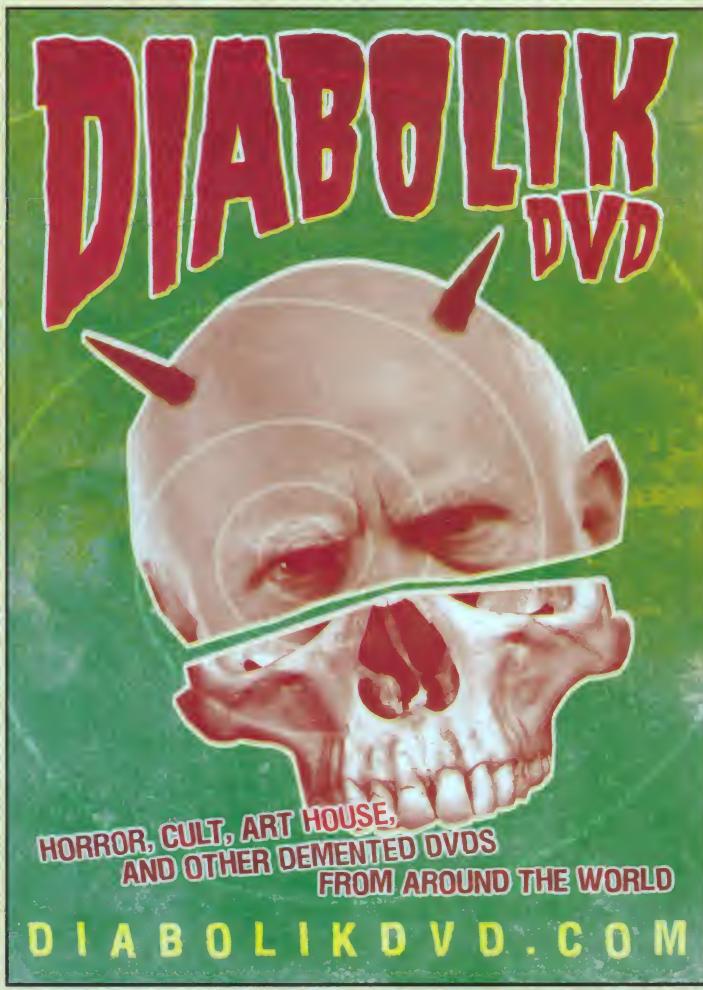
# NEXT ISSUE

Have you ever wondered if your next-door neighbor was an alien? If everyone around you has been brainwashed and you are the last sane man on Earth? Next issue, for the first time, *HorrorHound* will delve into the world of science fiction – in response to the upcoming prequel for *The Thing* – we take a look at the history of body-snatcher films, as well as movie monsters from outer space – a virtual tribute to all things creepy in the world of sci-fi!

Matthijs van Heijningen Jr.'s prequel of *The Thing* is due to hit theaters this October, starring Mary Elizabeth Winstead (*Grindhouse*), Joel Edgerton (*King Arthur*) and Ulrich Thomsen (*Hitman*), and *HorrorHound* was on-set during production to speak with the stars of the film and get an inside look at the recapturing of John Carpenter's classic. We take a detailed look at the new film while presenting a special retrospective on both the 1951 original *The Thing From Another World*, and John Carpenter's 1982 remake.

If that wasn't enough, nearly every major alien-invasion film is representing in some format or another as we unleash another "tribute" issue similar to the "comic book" issue you hold in your hands. Everything from *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *Alien* to *War of the Worlds* (the classic and modern interpretations) and *They Live* will be covered.

If that wasn't enough, we will deliver an Artist Spotlight on Norman Saunders – the amazing artist behind such works as *Mar's Attacks*, *Wacky Packs*, and various pulp and sci-fi magazines. Regular features such as Video Invasion, Kitley's Krypt and all the movie, home video, toy, and comic book news you can shake a stick at – available in *HorrorHound* #31 this September!



# CONVENTION CALENDAR

## Horror Movie Conventions and Autograph Shows:

### Fright Night Film Fest

July 22 thru 24th, 2011

Louisville, KY

[www.frightnightfilmfest.com](http://www.frightnightfilmfest.com)

(Featuring John Carpenter, Henry Winkler, Larry Drake and more!)

### Flashback Weekend

August 12 thru 14th, 2011

Rosemont, IL

[www.flashbackweekend.com](http://www.flashbackweekend.com)

(Featuring Robert Englund, Lance Henriksen and more!)

### Monster-Mania Con

August 19 thru 21st, 2011

Cherry Hill, NJ

[www.monstermania.net](http://www.monstermania.net)

(Featuring Alex Winter and more!)

### Rue Morgue Festival of Fear

August 25 thru 28th, 2011

Toronto, Canada

[www.rue-morgue.com/rmp\\_fof.php](http://www.rue-morgue.com/rmp_fof.php)

(Featuring Robert Englund, John Waters, Eliza Dushku and more!)

### HorrorFind Weekend

September 2 thru 4th, 2011

Gettysburg, PA

[www.horrorfindweekend.com](http://www.horrorfindweekend.com)

(Featuring John Waters and more!)

### Scarefest Horror & Paranormal

September 23 thru 25th, 2011

Lexington, KY

[www.thescarefest.com](http://www.thescarefest.com)

(Featuring Elvira, Lance Henriksen, Michael Biehn and more!)

### Cinema Wasteland

September 30 thru Oct 2nd, 2011

Strongsville, OH

[www.cinemawasteland.com](http://www.cinemawasteland.com)

(Featuring Frank Henenlotter, Kevin Van Hentenryck and more!)

### Rock and Shock

October 14 thru 16th, 2011

Worcester, MA

[www.rockandshock.com](http://www.rockandshock.com)

(Featuring Robert Englund, Lance Henriksen and more!)

### HorrorHound Weekend

November 11 thru 13th, 2011

Cincinnati, OH

[www.horrorhoundweekend.com](http://www.horrorhoundweekend.com)

(Featuring Anthony Michael Hall, Michael Rooker, a Pet Sematary reunion and more!)

\*See next issue for more show listings.

## Film Festival and Haunting Tradeshow Events:

### Viscera Film Festival

July 17th, 2011

Los Angeles, CA

[www.viscerafilmfestival.com](http://www.viscerafilmfestival.com)

### Chicago Horror Film Festival

September 23 thru 25th, 2011

Chicago, IL

[www.chicagohorrorfest.com](http://www.chicagohorrorfest.com)

### Horrific Film Fest

August 25 thru 28th, 2011

San Antonio, TX

[www.horrficfilmfest.com](http://www.horrficfilmfest.com)

### H.P. Lovecraft Film Festival

September 16 thru 17th, 2011

San Pedro, CA

[www.hplfilmfestival.com](http://www.hplfilmfestival.com)

### FantasticFest

September 22 thru 29th, 2011

Austin, TX

[www.fantasticfest.com](http://www.fantasticfest.com)

### Flint Horror Con

October 8th, 2011

Flint, MI

[flinthorrorcon.webnode.com](http://flinthorrorcon.webnode.com)

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Inducting *Dracula* into the HorrorHound Hall of Fame is akin to welcoming George Washington to the White House or Les Paul to the Rock and Roll Museum. To put it bluntly, it is the horse to which the genre hitched its proverbial cart, and had the seminal vampire film not been received favorably in its time, one has to wonder where the state of horror would be today. But success it was, saving Universal from bankruptcy during the Great Depression, and 80 years later the original 1931 classic chiller's spectre continues to loom large. Ostensibly THE film that started it all – one that, combined with the one-two punch of *Frankenstein*, sparked a wellspring that has come to define “classic horror.”

Though Bram Stoker's 1897 novel had been previously filmed (sans rights) by German filmmaker F.W. Murnau in 1922 as *Nosferatu*, director Tod Browning's version marked the true beginning of the horror film as a distinct genre and the vampire movie as its most-popular iteration. Silent star (and frequent Browning collaborator) Lon Chaney seemed the natural choice for the titular role. But when the venerable Man of a Thousand Faces succumbed to cancer in 1930, the studio found their leading man in the form of Hungarian Bela Lugosi, who had played the part to great acclaim on Broadway. (Since screenwriter Garret Fort employed Hamilton Deane and John Balderston's stage play as his template, this made perfect sense, not to mention the fact that as a newcomer, Universal acquired Lugosi for a song.)

The early scenes set in distant Transylvania are where *Dracula* truly shines, thanks in no small part to cinematographer Karl Freund, himself a veteran of Expressionistic cinema, and his drifting, dollying camera. From estate agent Renfield's (Dwight Frye) breakneck carriage ride to Lugosi's immortal introduction (“I ... am ... Dracula.”), from the ghostly vampiric brides wandering the cellar to the marvelous shipboard sequences, this is a master class in Gothic imagery. At the height of his powers, Lugosi revels in teasing juicy menace from every syllable, each line a sound bite for the ages, drifting through curtains of cobwebs whilst dodging the occasional armadillo, eyes illuminated by Freund's ever-attendant pinspots....

Granted, once the Count relocates to London, Lugosi spends a goodly amount of time off-screen and the rest of the film settles down considerably. It is here that the rest of the cast is introduced, which include lackluster leads Helen Chandler and David Manners, and the estimable Edward Van Sloan (another veteran of the Broadway production) as Dr. Van Helsing. The drawing room drama elements have not aged well, especially when compared to the dazzling sets and high-tension histrionics that James Whale and company would bring to the party only a few months later.

Likewise, fewer cinematic moments exemplify the term “anticlimactic” more profoundly than the Count's demise, a muffled offscreen groan proffered in place of his due sanguinary staking. Nevertheless, the confrontational scenes between Van

# HorrorHound HALL OF FAME **DRACULA**

by Aaron Christensen

Sloan's cagey vampire hunter and Lugosi's ruthless bloodsucker wield considerable dramatic power while Frye's Renfield, now transformed into a giggling, fly-and-scenery-devouring cartoon character, never fails to entertain.

Released on February 14, 1931,

with the female-entrancing tagline, “The Strangest Love Story of All,” *Dracula* was immediately met with critical and public acclaim. Universal's biggest moneymaker of the year, its star became an overnight celebrity, and rightly so. At the peak of his popularity, Lugosi received as many fan letters as any screen idol, the vast majority from women. His mellifluous, accented voice played a large part in his mystique, casting an intoxicating spell of unfamiliarity. It's pointless to debate whether or not Lugosi is a good actor or not at this juncture – he IS Dracula, and his indelible imprint on the role is undeniably felt eight decades on. If any doubt were to be raised, try to conjure an image of “Dracula” minus the actor's widow's peak, jet black hair, arched eyebrows. ... Even on dollar-store Halloween makeup kits, this is the face of the Vampire King. *Dracula* captured an actor at the top of his game (quite literally, it seems, as Lugosi would be typecast as the Count the remainder of his life).

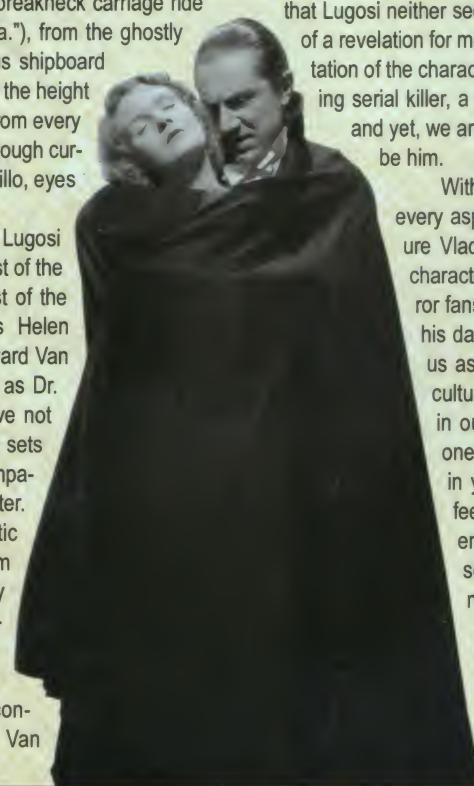
In sharp juxtaposition to today's sparkling, lovestruck nightwalkers, it is also worth noting that Lugosi's Count is presented as an entirely evil being, a true Prince of Darkness. While he may have preferred to feast on lovely ladies (his

munching of Renfield nixed by the censors), there are no illusions of being emotionally torn about heading up the food chain. Posited as the ultimate predator,

that Lugosi neither seeks nor needs the audience's sympathy is something of a revelation for modern viewers. Far closer to Stoker's original interpretation of the character, this is no conflicted romantic hero. He is a charming serial killer, a hypnotizing rapist, a voracious, immortal parasite ... and yet, we are fascinated by him. We identify with him. We want to be him.

With countless books, articles, songs, etc. written about every aspect of its star, director and the real-life historical figure Vlad the Impaler upon which Stoker partially based his character, it's impossible to imagine a time when we, as horror fans, weren't aware of the film and its legacy. Lugosi and his daylight-despising screen counterpart are as familiar to us as Mickey Mouse or Superman – they are part of our cultural makeup. We invoked him the moment we jammed in our first plastic pair of fangs, “vunting” to suck someone's blood, and even if we haven't seen the movie itself in years (or ever, some might shamefully confess), we feel a kinship toward this Transylvanian nobleman who entranced us fourscore years ago with nary an on-screen fang nor drop of blood. This vampire doesn't need CGI; he dazzles with pure screen presence.

We bid you welcome into the venerable HorrorHound Hall of Fame, *Dracula*. Glass of wine? Oh, that's right, you never ... and please bring your children of the night as well – you know we dig their music. 



*Dracula* (1962): Dracula appeared in dozens of comics over the years, including this one-shot from classic publisher Dell Comics. In 1966 Dell released an ongoing series featuring Dracula as a super hero!?

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